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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Listen to our prayers, Almighty God. Let not our Nation be ashamed. You are our mighty rock and fortress. Lead and guide us, enabling us to honor Your Name. Protect our lawmakers from the hidden traps that can derail freedom. Remind them that the truth alone will make us free. Show Yourself strong even to those who strive to save themselves. Manifest Your might to all. May our Senators trust You, seek Your wisdom, and obey Your precepts.

We pray in Your mighty 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 ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 1 minute.

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

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in recent years, the opioid epidemic has resulted in steadily climbing numbers of kids entering foster care.

However, in 2018, the number of children in foster care has declined for the first time since 2011. This is evidence that prevention programs are working.

It is important this renewed focus on prevention continues as all 50 States

work to implement the Family First Prevention Services Act. When child welfare agencies have more tools, which they will have through this new legislation, to help families before children must be removed, outcomes are better for communities, better for parents, and, more importantly, better for the children we are trying to protect.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

HONG KONG HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday the U.S. Senate spoke up forcefully and clearly for the brave people of Hong Kong. We unanimously passed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act.

As the author of the original United States-Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992, and somebody who has advocated for Hongkongers for decades, I was proud to speak out on this back in the summer when the protests began. I was also proud to secure important policy steps for Hong Kong in the Senate Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs back in September.

I am also proud that Senators approved these further steps to update the original law to preserve Hong Kong's autonomy and democracy and provide more tools for holding Beijing accountable.

I want to thank the senior Senator from Florida, all the other Members who led on this issue, and all of our colleagues for securing unanimous passage.

While this bill moves forward, it is also important for the executive branch and our allies and partners around the world to fulfill their roles as well. Even before this new bill becomes law, Congress has already given the administration significant powers to act, including authorities to directly sanction individuals who violate human rights. I urge every trading nation around the world to look clearly at Hong Kong and at Xinjiang and imagine the costs as China continues to entrench its surveillance state and export it all around the world.

The Senate continues to do our part. Everyone else must do theirs as well. The United States and the world must stand with Hong Kong.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, earlier this week, I got to attend the Kentucky Electric Cooperative's annual meeting. The group represents 26 co-ops across Kentucky, particularly in rural communities.

We talked about the positive trends for what you might call Middle America over the past several years—the nascent economic turnaround in small towns, small cities, farm country, rural America, and other places the Obama economy largely left behind.

We also talked about the work still ahead. One of the major priorities that Kentuckians mentioned is the USMCA. I have heard it from our farmers, manufacturers, logistics providers, and bourbon distillers. Almost every sector of our economy would benefit from this trade deal.

Together, Canada and Mexico make up a \$500 billion export market for the United States. This major update to

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



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our trading framework with our neighbors would send that number even higher, generate more wealth here at home, and create an estimated 176,000 new American jobs.

It is no wonder that so many Kentuckians and so many people around the country want Washington to get it done. I hear from everybody, from family farming operations to midsize manufacturers, to Fortune 500 firms, such as UPS and Toyota, that employ thousands and thousands in my State. All of them want this fairer, better playing field in trade with Canada and Mexico.

In a little more than a week from now, it will have been a full year since President Trump signed the draft agreement along with the leaders of Canada and Mexico—1 full year—but for months now, this generational agreement has been sitting on ice over in the House of Representatives. Speaker PELOSI has refused to allow a vote.

In public, House Democrats insist and insist that they care about more things than simply impeaching the President. They insist that they want to work together and legislate, but actions speak louder than words, and apparently, thus far, House Democrats have preferred to block 176,000 new jobs for American workers rather than put impeachment aside and get along with the White House for 5 minutes. It appears there is no governing priority—no matter how bipartisan, no matter how beneficial to American families—that will not take a backseat to impeachment.

Month after month, every time she has been asked about this subject, the Speaker of the House has offered the same empty rhetoric. She is always close to allowing the vote. Her conference is always “almost there, almost there,” but we have been almost there for months and months with no outcome in sight. Lots of talk but zero results.

Back in February, the Speaker was asked about the USMCA. She said, “I’m optimistic.” That was last February.

We heard the same thing in May and in June. “We want to pass this bill.” We heard the same thing through the summer and in September and in October. “Every day we’re becoming closer,” she said. A few weeks ago the Speaker said: “I think we are close . . . the last mile,” and she called this “the easiest trade deal that we’ve ever done.” A few days ago, the Speaker insisted, yet again, a vote was “imminent.” That was a few days ago.

This has been the House Democrats’ wild goose chase. This is what our American families, American job creators, and our partners in Mexico and Canada have had to put up with. Every time the Trump administration meets the Speaker halfway, she tries to move the goal post another 10 yards. She literally has not even updated her own talking points since Valentine’s Day—textbook obstruction.

Just in case anybody did not yet understand that the real roadblock here is partisan politics, I understand the Speaker hosted Richard Trumka yesterday, head of the AFL–CIO, a power player in leftwing Big Labor. He came to the Capitol to quell the uprising of the Democrats’ own Members who can’t believe this thing still hasn’t passed. How ironic. We are talking about a trade deal that would create more American jobs, and Democrats are considering outsourcing their judgment to Big Labor special interests, who, to my recollection, have not supported a single major trade deal in living memory.

Let’s get this straight. It sounds like the head of the AFL–CIO—an organization that has never supported any trade agreement—is now the guy who gives the go-ahead on USMCA? We are talking about a trade deal, and Democrats are considering outsourcing their own jobs to the head of AFL–CIO—really? I wish I were making this up.

Reporters got ahold of the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee yesterday, and he literally said the deal would move forward “if we can get Richard Trumka to agree.” So the head of the AFL–CIO—an organization that has never supported a trade agreement—is now the guy who has to green-light the USMCA, which would create 176,000 American jobs. No wonder they have a problem in the House. The chairman of the Ways and Means Committee literally said that this major trade agreement will move forward only if this major Democratic campaign contributor gives them permission.

Well, it appears that even some House Democrats are getting fed up with the absurdity. Here is what one of them said yesterday:

[Trumka] still says we’re at the five yard line. . . . So it feels like we’ve been at the five yard line for a while.

No kidding. This is the biggest opportunity the House Democrats have had in the entirety of their first year in power to do something significant and substantive for American families—to actually pass something new and real that can become law and strengthen our Nation. In other words, the USMCA is House Democrats’ final exam for their whole first year in power. And unless something turns around very quickly, after nearly a year of happy talk and empty promises, their leadership seems determined to flunk that exam. All impeachment, all the time—and even the most obvious win for American workers and small businesses gets blocked. That will be Democrats’ progress report if USMCA goes nowhere. Obviously, I hope that is not how this story ends.

Mexico has passed it. Canada is waiting on us. I believe a bipartisan majority of the Senate is ready to pass it. Our workers, our job creators, and our neighbors are just waiting on Speaker PELOSI. This is no time to kill a national victory out of political spite.

This is no time to outsource your judgment to special interests. The Speaker should allow a vote, and the House should send us the USMCA.

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 CALENDER

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Barbara Lagoa, of Florida, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, with government funding set to expire tomorrow, the House of Representatives passed a continuing resolution yesterday to fund the government through December 20. It is now up to the Senate to pass the continuing resolution without much fuss and send it to the President’s desk before the deadline.

As the Republican leader and I work to set the time for that vote, we must look ahead. The continuing resolution will give appropriators additional time to get a bipartisan appropriations process back on track before the end of the year. The Senate has been able to process several noncontroversial appropriations bills, bipartisan, but several more can’t move forward until the Democrats and the Republicans both all agree on the allocations. You can’t do it with one party. That leads to trouble. In recent days, we have made some progress, and I hope the talks between both sets of appropriators—House and Senate, Democratic and Republican—will continue in good faith and in earnest after we finish the continuing resolution.

At the same time, there are several very important issues the Democrats are trying to address in the continuing

resolution that the Senate Republicans refuse to address. Most notably, the Republicans objected to restoring expired funding for the minority-serving institutions, including historically Black colleges and universities, Tribal colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions, and predominantly Black institutions.

These are ladders up. Such a high percentage of people of color—people in minority groups—use these colleges to create great lives for themselves. They work hard, and they study. There are no alternatives for them other than these institutions. To hold the money back, which is what the other side is doing, is so wrong. It is so unfair.

The Democrats will not stop fighting the fight to help these institutions, and we are committed to securing this funding in any way we can. These are American dream institutions. If you believe in the American dream, you shouldn't be holding this money back.

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. President, on Syria, the Defense Intelligence Agency—it is like the CIA, but it is for the Defense Department; it is very well respected and very non-partisan and is great in many ways—released a new assessment yesterday that confirms, unfortunately, many of our worst fears. If people haven't seen this assessment, it is really important. I would urge people to look at it.

What did the assessment indicate?

President Trump's own Defense Department wrote that President Trump, by his precipitously withdrawing our troops from northern Syria, has given ISIS a lifeline.

In the chaos that has followed Erdogan's military offensive—an offensive, unfortunately, that President Trump green-lit, much to the consternation of people on both sides of the aisle—ISIS has had room to rebuild. Not only did the assessment suggest that the Islamic State is “postured to withstand” the recent death of its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, but it concluded that the Islamic State “exploited the Turkish incursion and subsequent drawdown of U.S. troops to reconstitute capabilities and resources within Syria and”—my emphasis but their words—“strengthen its ability to plan attacks abroad.”

By President Trump's giving in to Erdogan, ISIS has been able to “strengthen its ability to plan attacks abroad.” Every American should hear that. Let me repeat. Because President Trump abruptly withdrew U.S. troops from northern Syria, ISIS has been able to strengthen its ability to plan attacks abroad. That is not an assessment from some outside group or agency; that is the assessment of the Defense Intelligence Agency, which is part of the Pentagon. The Trump administration needs to get a handle on this situation fast.

Despite this new damning assessment, we still have no idea what the

President plans to do to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS. President Trump has welcomed President Erdogan to the White House, but he hasn't produced a plan to defeat ISIS. This is an administration run amuck. This is security. This is vital to America. There is no plan about ISIS, but there is the greeting of Erdogan—a dictator whose desire to go after ISIS isn't close to ours. He would much rather go after the Kurds—our main protector from ISIS other than the United States itself.

Meanwhile, there are now reports that Russian forces have taken control of the former U.S. military base in northern Syria. The pictures of Russia's entering that deserted base because American soldiers were told they had to leave by the President is not a picture Americans want to see. It is incredible. The President continues to demonstrate an uncanny ability to get steamrolled by autocrats like Erdogan and like Putin without getting a thing in return.

It has been nearly 2 months since the President announced the withdrawal of U.S. troops, and we still don't know what comes next. We all know that a small band of terrorists far away is more than capable of inflicting great damage on our shores, and the intelligence assessments have now confirmed that ISIS has been able to strengthen its ability to do just that.

President Trump, what is your plan to defeat ISIS and protect the United States?

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. President, on the NDAA, the Defense authorization bill, the annual defense bill, which passed this Chamber months ago, has been stalled in the process of reconciling the Senate's version with the House's version.

One of the snags, it now appears, is the Republican leader's unwillingness to include a strong package of sanctions directed at any foreign nation that should try to interfere in our elections. That is right. One of the reasons the national defense bill has not been sent to the President's desk is because Majority Leader McCONNELL and his Republican colleagues do not want to include a strong deterrent to interfering in American elections.

Earlier this month, all leading U.S. national security officials—Attorney General Barr, Secretary of Defense Esper, Acting Secretary of Homeland Security McAleenan, Acting Director of National Intelligence Maguire, FBI Director Wray, and U.S. Cyber Command Commander Nakasone—released a statement that read the following:

Our adversaries want to undermine our democratic institutions, influence public sentiment and affect government policies. Russia, China, Iran, and other foreign malicious actors all will seek to interfere in the voting process or influence voter perceptions.

Those are not my words. They are from the leaders of this administration, including the Secretaries of Defense and State and the head of the NSA.

We know that Putin interfered in the 2016 elections. We know he is trying to do it again. That is clear. We need to send an unmistakable message to President Putin and other foreign actors—China and Iran—that we will not tolerate any interference in our elections.

Unfortunately, Leader McCONNELL seems to have missed that memo. How he could ignore a statement by the leaders of the administration he supports is beyond me. The Republican leader has repeatedly downplayed the threat to our democracy from foreign actors like President Putin. He has repeatedly blocked commonsense, bipartisan legislation to protect our elections and is now blocking the inclusion of tough, mandatory sanctions on Russia or on any other foreign country that seeks to interfere in our elections.

I hope, for the sake of the Defense bill and for the sake of our elections, the Republican leader will relent and allow a package of tough sanctions to be included.

Unfortunately, election security is not the only issue holding up the Defense bill. The Republican leader is blocking many other important provisions.

The Democrats want to extend family leave benefits to all Federal employees. The majority leader and the Republicans are blocking that. This is a new world. Family leave is necessary to everyone. Here we have a chance to do it for Federal workers, and our Republican friends are saying no.

The Democrats want to clean up our communities and military installations that have been poisoned by PFAS and other contaminants, but the majority leader and our friends, the Republicans here in the Senate, are blocking that.

The Democrats want to send a signal to the Trump administration that it does not have a blank check to wage a war and that only Congress can approve major military operations. Majority Leader McCONNELL and the Republicans are blocking that as well.

There are hosts of important issues that are holding up the final passage of the national defense bill. These are just a few of them. I strongly urge my Republican friends and, especially, Republican Leader McCONNELL to work with us to address these provisions. The Democrats want to see that this bill gets done and that it gets done in a way that safeguards our elections, our troops, our communities, and advances America's interests around the globe.

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

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

FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there are various options available for graduates of high schools across the United States. Some of them choose to go to college or university, but even making that choice gives you a lot of options.

There are basically two categories of schools, though, that I want to address in this statement this morning. One category is called for-profit colleges and universities, and the other is the traditional not-for-profit colleges and universities, which would include your community colleges and public universities and many not-for-profit, private universities.

But I want to focus this morning on the for-profit colleges and universities in the United States. People sometimes can't make the distinction between which is which. Some of the big names in the for-profit industry include the University of Phoenix. That is one you probably heard of. DeVry University is another one you might have heard of.

There are some defining characteristics of these schools. They, of course, are in business to make money, and they have a different economic model than many of the other universities.

I have met the CEOs of for-profit colleges and universities and found that in some cases they have limited or no experience when it comes to education. They are investors. They are business people. The idea of education is a secondary part of why they were chosen.

There is an important statistic—in fact, two statistics—that I want to preface my remarks with, and these will be on the final, I might add, for those who are following this statement.

The numbers 9 and 33—9 and 33. Why are they important? Nine percent of postsecondary students go to for-profit colleges and universities—9 percent—but 33 percent of all the federal student loan defaults in the United States are students from for-profit colleges and universities—9 percent of the students, 33 percent of federal student loan defaults.

What is going on here?

Well, what is happening here, unfortunately, is that many of these students are signing up for the for-profit schools that they think are legitimate colleges and universities, and, frankly, they are dramatically overcharging them.

Every analysis we have gone through says that the tuition at these for-profit schools far exceeds what students are likely to pay, certainly, in a community college and in the case of many public colleges and universities. So they have a big tuition bill to start with, and they have poor results.

What kind of results? Students graduate believing that they are being trained or educated to do a certain profession, and then they find out that they can't do the job or they don't qualify for the job, or they get so deeply in debt on the way to graduating, they give up and quit—the worst of all possible outcomes.

So that is the preface on these for-profit colleges and universities. I have come to this floor many times over the years to talk about this industry because we treat it in the eyes of the public like higher education across the board, and yet it is much, much different. It is for profit as opposed to not for profit, and, frankly, the results of that education leave a lot to be desired.

It has been more than 5 years since the for-profit giant Corinthian College collapsed. Their economic model didn't work. For years, Corinthian had lied, inflating its job placement rates and engaging in high-pressure tactics to lure students into enrolling, often leaving them with massive student loan debt and a diploma that didn't work to find a job.

But Corinthian was not unique. As I have said many times, it turned out to be the canary in the coal mine. Since Corinthian College, we have seen the collapse of several other major predatory for-profit colleges and universities. They include ITT Tech, Westwood, Education Corporation of America, and Dream Center. Nearly every major for-profit college company has been the subject of extensive investigations and lawsuits for unfair and deceptive practices similar to Corinthian College.

Check with the attorney general of your home State about that for-profit college and university, and, almost without fail, you will find that they have been investigated for misleading and deceiving the students who go to school at their universities.

I have long said that we shouldn't leave the students holding the bag for the misdeeds of these institutions because, you see, we are complicit. The Federal Government is part of the problem.

How do these schools reach the point where you can take out a Federal student loan to attend? We accredit them. We recognize their accreditation. We tell the world and the families and the students that these are legitimate schools. Depending on that, these students who sign up for a better experience, are often misled, deceived, and overcharged. Ultimately, a third of them are in default on their student loans because they can't pay them back.

There is a provision in the Higher Education Act known as borrower defense. It gives the students the right to have their Federal student loans discharged by the Secretary of Education if they have been defrauded or subject to deception by these schools.

After Corinthian's collapse, this little known, rarely used provision in the law became a hot topic. All of a sudden, here were large numbers of students who had been defrauded and deceived by Corinthian College and went deeply into debt, and now the college goes out of business.

It turns out that most of the hours they took can't be transferred any-

where. It is worthless. They were defrauded, start to finish, and now they are left holding the student loan bag.

Thousands of Corinthian students and other borrowers, mostly from for-profit colleges, began applying for this borrower defense discharge from the U.S. Department of Education. It was in the law. It led the Obama administration to undertake a new rulemaking to update the borrower defense regulation, which dated back to 1994, and to create a standard process for dealing with the inundation and to attempt to prevent future collapses.

Soon after taking office, Secretary Betsy DeVos and the Trump administration delayed implementation of the Obama rule, despite the Department's own inspector general saying that implementing the rule would "avoid costs to students and taxpayers that result from school closures."

Secretary DeVos said: I am not going to be a party to that. Her delay was challenged in court. Her decision to delay this new rule was found illegal by a Federal judge, after which the current rule went into effect, and it remains in effect today. Secretary DeVos also announced she would begin a new rulemaking to replace the current rule.

In late August, Secretary DeVos released her borrower defense rule, the new rule which she wants to put in place. It actually guts the borrower and taxpayer protections in the current borrower defense rule and makes it nearly impossible for students holding this student loan debt who have been defrauded to get relief.

How does she make it so hard?

It is estimated that the rule will provide \$11 billion less in relief to defrauded borrowers—students—than the current rule. Among other things, the new Betsy DeVos rule increases the burden on these defrauded students to gather and submit almost impossible amounts of evidence to somehow prove their claim. Student borrowers will have to provide evidence that the school intentionally harmed them.

Now, how are they supposed to do that?

The DeVos rule—the new one—requires borrowers to apply individually rather than receiving automatic discharges when they are part of a group of student borrowers who have been harmed by similar practices by places like Corinthian. In other words, you are on your own. Get your own lawyer. Lawyer up. Get some evidence together. Come see us, and maybe we will be convinced.

Student borrowers who have been cheated are not exactly the wealthiest group in America. They are often facing incredible financial difficulties and deep emotional strain, with a mountain of debt and nothing to show for it because of these for-profit schools. Now Secretary DeVos wants them to be investigators and lawyers and get their own relief one by one.

The DeVos rule also eliminates the current prohibition on class action restrictions and mandatory arbitration clauses in enrollment.

What does that mean?

Under the current rule which Secretary DeVos wants to replace, you could gather the other students from Corinthian College and work on this together as a class action claim, share whatever expenses that might be involved in proving your claim, and you couldn't be forced into an arbitration where you are likely to lose. You could have your day in court under the rule that Secretary DeVos wants to replace.

Class action restrictions and mandatory arbitration were used by Corinthian and ITT Tech and others that required students to sign away their rights to sue the school as an individual or as part of a class as a condition of enrollment.

The DeVos rule prevents students from holding schools directly accountable for their wrongdoing and seeking financial redress through the courts. It gives students no other option than to seek relief from taxpayers through borrower defense, but, as I just mentioned, it makes that process almost impossible.

And if anyone doubts the devastating effect this rule will have on the defrauded students' ability to get relief, just look at what Secretary DeVos has done to date.

Since taking office Secretary DeVos has had the authority to discharge hundreds of millions of dollars in student loan debt held by hundreds of thousands of defrauded student borrowers. Instead, she has allowed a backlog of more than 200,000 borrower defense claims from virtually every State in the Nation—student borrower defense claims coming from all 50 States—to build at the Department. She is sitting on it. She is playing slow ball. She has not approved a single claim. Although more than 200,000 claims are pending, she has not approved a single claim in more than 1 year.

Here I want to show you what is behind this. In the few cases where Secretary DeVos has been legally required to provide discharges, she has done so with extreme displeasure.

Think about that. Using her authority to help defrauded borrowers get a fresh start brings her extreme displeasure.

How do I know that?

She wrote it. Here is one of them. Recommendation to discharge. She approves it, signs it, and puts down as a comment: "with extreme displeasure."

Discharging a student loan from a for-profit institution that defrauded borrowers, she is displeased to be forced to do such a thing.

She defied a Federal court order and was held in contempt for continuing to collect from these students who had been defrauded by Corinthian.

This is not a Secretary who rewrote the borrower defense rule to help stu-

dent borrowers. In September, I introduced a resolution in the Senate to overturn the DeVos borrower defense rule; 42 of my colleagues have cosponsored that resolution.

I plan to bring the resolution to a vote on the Senate floor where we will only need a simple majority to pass under the expedited procedures provided for in the Congressional Review Act. At that time, my colleagues will have a choice. Will you stand with Secretary DeVos or with the defrauded student borrowers in your State?

There is no doubt where the American people stand. In a 2016 New America poll, the question was asked whether Americans agreed that students should have their Federal student loan debt canceled if their college deceived them, exactly what the borrower defense rule is about.

Seventy-one percent of Republicans said yes, 87 percent of Democrats. On average, 78 percent of Americans understand it is fundamentally unfair to penalize these students, having been defrauded by a school that this U.S. Government said was doing business honestly and professionally. When you break the numbers down, it is clear. The overwhelming majority of people in this country stand by the students, but not by Secretary DeVos.

I will stand with the defrauded students and the American people over Secretary DeVos, and my colleagues in the Senate will get a chance to vote. I hope they will, too.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from South Dakota.

JUDICIAL CONFIRMATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, yesterday, we confirmed Robert Luck, a Florida supreme court justice, to be a U.S. Circuit judge for the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. With Justice Luck's confirmation, the Senate has now confirmed 47 appellate court judges during this administration and 163 Article III judges overall.

That is more appellate court judges than had been confirmed at this point in any of the previous five Presidential administrations, and it is a particularly outstanding number when you consider that the Democrats have made confirming these judges as difficult as they possibly can. From day one of this administration, Democrats were determined to obstruct anything this President did, his nominations in particular.

Again and again and again, they have attempted to block nominees for no other reason than the fact that they were nominated by this President. Democrats have subjected roughly 75 percent of the administration's judicial nominees to the time-consuming cloture process. Compare that to the treatment of President Obama's nominees. At this point in President Obama's administration, roughly 3 percent of his judicial nominees had been subjected to cloture votes—just 3 per-

cent, 3 percent versus 75 percent for President Trump.

The difference in these numbers is not because this President has nominated scores of extreme nominees who Democrats felt they could not support. In fact, Democrats have repeatedly turned around and voted for the very same judges they have obstructed. In one particularly egregious example, in January of 2018, Democrats forced the Senate to spend more than a week confirming four district court judges, even though not one single Democrat voted against their confirmation. These judges could have been confirmed in a matter of minutes by voice vote, but Democrats forced the Senate to spend more than a week on their consideration, time that could have been spent on genuinely controversial nominees or on some of the important issues facing our country.

Despite Democrats' obstruction, we have continued to move forward, and as I said, yesterday, we confirmed our 163rd judge to the Federal bench. Today, we will confirm our 164th. We are putting judges on the bench with a real respect for the law and for the Constitution and a commitment to applying the law as written.

Now, those sound like basic requirements for a judge, but too often, it seems like my Democrat colleagues are interested not in judges who will uphold the law, but in judges who will act like superlegislators, rewriting the law and the Constitution when they do not fit with the Democrats' political opinions, and that is a very dangerous thing.

When judges rule based not on what the law actually says, but what they think the law should be, they undermine a fundamental principle of our system of government. Our system is based on belief in the rule of law. In the American system, the law is supposed to be the final, impartial arbiter. Cases are to be decided based on what the law says, not on what a particular judge feels.

Sure, it might seem nice when an activist judge goes outside the meaning of a law and rules for your preferred outcome. But what happens when that same judge reaches beyond the law to your detriment? What protection do you have if the law is no longer the highest authority? Equal treatment under the law, equal justice under the law, these principles can only be maintained as long as judges actually rule based on the law and not on their personal feelings or personal opinions.

My Democrat colleagues have shown a disturbing tendency to believe that their opinions are the only ones that should prevail. They disapproved of the outcome of the last election, and so for 3 years, they have done everything they can to undermine a duly-elected President. They are upset by the fact that the President got to replace a perceived swing vote on the Supreme Court, and the solution floated by more than one member of their party was to pack the Supreme Court.

For anyone who needs a refresher on an idea that most thought had been consigned to the dustbin of history decades ago, the theory of court-packing is as follows: If the Supreme Court is not deciding cases to your liking, add more Justices to the Court until you start getting the decisions that you want.

Listen to Democrats question judicial nominees, and it soon becomes apparent that their biggest concern is not finding judges who will uphold the law and the Constitution, but judges who will uphold Democrats' political opinions and preferred policy outcomes. It is a disturbing trend. It is natural to want your party to prevail and to believe that your ideas are the best ones for the country. It is another thing entirely to start acting like your opinions are the only ones that should ever prevail, regardless of election outcomes or the wishes of the American people.

I am proud that we are putting judges on the bench who will rule according to the law and to the Constitution, not their personal opinions, their political beliefs, or the political party of the individuals before their court. I am proud that we are putting judges on the bench who will help ensure that the rule of law is maintained and that everyone in their courtroom receives the equal protection of the law.

I look forward to confirming more excellent judges in the near future.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, Montanans are growing restless, as Speaker PELOSI and the House Democrats continue to slow-walk a very important trade agreement for Montana and for our country. That is the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

In fact, just last week, I was in Billings to celebrate the Montana Farm Bureau Federation's 100 year anniversary—and, again, another big congratulations to the Montana Farm Bureau. As I was talking with folks at the farm bureau event, there were a lot of cowboy boots and hats. These are the farmers and ranchers of Montana, the salt of the earth folks. They are all asking the same question: Why is it taking so long? What is going on?

Frankly, there is one answer: Speaker NANCY PELOSI and House Democrats are playing political games and holding up this trade deal. They are holding this trade deal hostage. It has been a year since the USMCA was signed by President Trump and leaders of Canada and Mexico—a year. NANCY PELOSI has had this signed trade agreement in her hands for about a year, and rather than deliver this win for our farmers and ranchers in Montana and across the United States, she is focused on one thing: impeachment—because, at the end of the day, this is about our farmers and ranchers. It is time we get the job done because, in Montana, agri-

culture is the No. 1 driver of our economy, and it is a large part of our Montana way of life.

This trade agreement is expected to create over 180,000 new American jobs and to boost our GDP by over \$70 billion. Canada and Mexico both are in high demand for our products like wheat, barley, beef. In fact, in 2018 alone, Montana had \$731 million in total exports to Canada and to Mexico. For our producers and our ag-related industries in Montana, passing this trade agreement would help provide certainty and alleviate the challenges and obstacles they have faced over a very tough season.

Mexico is ready. Canada is ready. The United States is ready. I can tell you, Montana is ready. Unfortunately, NANCY PELOSI is not. While the Democrats continue to obsess over impeaching our President, they continue to ignore the voices of our rural communities. This unnecessary reality TV show is nothing but a waste of time to stall the important work like the USMCA. Montanans are sick and tired of the politics and the partisan games being played here in Washington, DC, and frankly, I am, too.

I am grateful for the leadership of my good friend and colleague, GREG GIANFORTE, who is standing up to House Democrats and fighting boldly for the USMCA. Realize, Montana has but one Member in the U.S. House of Representatives, and he is fighting a good fight over there.

We are both fighting to ensure that the votes of Montana farmers and ranchers are heard loud and clear in both Chambers of Congress. The longer the House Democrats stall on this deal, the further we stall opportunity and economic growth in Montana and across our Nation.

To Speaker PELOSI, to my colleagues in the House, enough is enough. Let's deliver the USMCA for the American people and for Montana farmers and ranchers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, first of all, let me say that I totally agree with my friend from Montana on the importance of, after a year of deliberation—or maybe “deliberation” is too strong a word—more than a year since all three countries agreed on an agreement, that we still have not gotten a chance to vote on this agreement on the Senate floor; we have to wait for the House to do that. I want to do everything that I can to encourage the House to move forward with this. I think better trade policy can turn a good economy into a great economy, and we need to be working on that great economy.

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Mr. President, I am here today to talk about another topic. I want to talk for a few minutes about the importance of November as National Adoption Month and to recognize the celebration of National Adoption Day,

which will take place on Saturday, November 23. I am pleased to work with my colleague and Senate cochair of the Congressional Coalition For Adoption, Senator KLOBUCHAR, again, to introduce this resolution supporting National Adoption Month and National Adoption Day. This is the 5th year Senator KLOBUCHAR and I have worked together on this legislation and the 5th year where I hope our colleagues will unanimously support it and do that this week.

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption is the largest bipartisan, bicameral caucus in all of Congress, and there is a good reason for that. In the Senate Subcommittee, where agreement is really too often hard to find, the idea that every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable home with a loving family is something that not only everybody should be able to agree with, but in the Congress, we have been able to agree with that in a broad-based sort of way.

Right now, there are more than 437,000 children in the foster care system in our country. More than 125,000 of those are children who are ready and waiting for families who want to get this adoption completed; yet the average length of time it takes a child from foster care to adoption, once the adoption decision has been made by the adopting family, is 19 months. I was in a meeting just last week with the administrator of this program in the administration who is doing everything I believe they can for the first time in a while to do what they can to reduce this wait.

I would also like to see the State Department, frankly, become for vigorous in encouraging foreign adoptions for those kids all over the world who are in need of families.

I don't disagree with the idea that if someone in Ethiopia wants to adopt an Ethiopian child or someone in Guatemala wants to adopt a Guatemalan child or someone in Russia wants to adopt a Russian child, that is all fine. But if they don't have adoptive families in the country they were born in, let's open the door in a more effective way for American families who want to be part of that.

There is some good news. For the fourth year in a row, the number of children who were adopted increased. Four years in a row, more kids were adopted than in the previous year. For the second year in a row, the number of children who entered foster families decreased. I don't want to say that in a way that takes anything away from people who are willing to be foster families, to give that security, that emotional embrace to kids who don't have that at home. Foster families serve a great purpose, but even foster families often become adoptive families, and they do this because they know that is a situation that becomes permanent. Knowing that you have a family forever makes a difference.

In my home State of Missouri, there are almost 13,000 kids in the foster system right now. I want to share a few of their stories.

Gabe, who is a 10th grader in Missouri, is a big fan of reading and big fan of watching movies. He hopes to join the military when he is older.

Natalie is 14. Natalie loves to read. She loves to draw. She loves to write. She loves to be outside. If she had a superpower, she says she would choose invisibility. This second grader really would like a permanent home. She wants to be a veterinarian someday. She is doing well in school. The thing she really needs is a home she can always go back to.

Ragan and Haylee are sisters who hope to have pets in their home. They don't have pets in their home right now. Ragan is a sixth grader who likes to laugh and draw and learn. Haylee is a fifth grader who likes to play soccer and spend time with her soccer teammates. Even sisters have different ways they look at the world. They would all like a family.

Last week, I had the privilege to meet with three families from Missouri who were here to be celebrated at the Angels in Adoption activity that occurred last week. This is something we do annually to recognize families who have gone above and beyond what you could expect in the adoption community. This was the first year there were Angels in Adoption being recognized from all 50 States and from Washington, DC. Of the three Missouri families I had a chance to spend some time with, one included Justin and Kristin Akin from Chesterfield. I actually first met Kristin when she came to my office to be an advocate for Be The Match. Be The Match is a Federally authorized and funded registry program that matches unrelated bone marrow donors with patients suffering from leukemia and from 70 other fatal blood cancers.

Kristin was here advocating for that because she and Justin had lost two sons, Andrew and Matthew, who were diagnosed with a rare disease and were unable to find matched donors. Kristin and Justin, after losing those two sons, adopted William and Christopher.

Kristin continues to be a volunteer to help other families trying to find that match. We are doing better with that program. In fact, we increased that program in our proposed budget for this year by \$5.4 million, as we increased the National Cord Blood Inventory Program also.

As important as that constant effort to do what they can so that other families didn't have happen to them what happened when they lost their two children was their decision to bring two more sons into their house and to do that by adopting.

I also had a chance to meet Zach and Joanna Holden. The Holdens began fostering in May of 2010. They were already parents of three young girls of their own, but they became foster par-

ents to make an impact on the lives of children, knowing it wouldn't be easy for their family but it would be an important thing to do for the kids they brought into their family. Through their 9 years as foster parents, the Holdens have had 30 different foster kids in their house and adopted 2 of those 30 kids through the foster care relationships they had.

In early 2012, they began a small ministry out of their garage called The Caring Closet, which later merged with Fostering Hope, another local foster care ministry. Joanna and that ministry—and the partnership now with Fostering Hope—gathered and sorted donations, put together packs of clothes, distributed them to local foster families wherever there was a need. Fostering Hope now supports children in foster care. They help foster families as they help foster kids, and they help foster care agencies across several communities in Southwest Missouri.

Jody and Mary Ann Allen-Parker also shared their incredible story with me. Nearly two decades ago, Mary Ann witnessed a tragic circumstance involving the friends of one of her sons. He explained a challenging situation he and his family were in, and he asked Mary Ann if he could move in with them. She took this child and, shortly after that, his two siblings under her care along with her own two children.

After going to court, Mary Ann was able to establish custody over those three kids as well. The oldest of them has joined the Marines and the other two are still at home with Mary Ann. She has given them the structure and focus they didn't have in their original home but they have through her, and they also have reconnected with their parents on a much different level than they ever had before.

There are lots of stories to be shared. There are lots of families who are waiting to adopt. There are lots of families who haven't thought about it yet who would be willing to adopt.

According to one survey, nearly one-quarter of the people in the United States who haven't adopted have considered being an adoptive parent. There are many concerns about adoption that aren't there once you get in, open that door, and look at what can happen when you create a forever family for somebody who needs one.

The same survey showed that over one-third of the participants believe that foster care adoption is expensive, and a majority of those considering foster care adoption indicated that receiving financial and emotional support would make a difference in deciding whether to adopt.

I will be sponsoring again this year the refundable tax credit for adoptive parents. About 50 percent of all the parents who adopt don't make enough money to pay income tax, which says a lot about them. It also says a lot about the fact that the system we have now—in which you get a tax credit, but you get a tax credit only if you pay taxes—

serves to encourage only about 50 percent of the families who are willing to stretch in unique ways and adopt kids.

Senator KLOBUCHAR and I have introduced the Supporting Adoptive Families Act to ensure adoptive families have access to pre- and post-adoption services, including mental and physical and behavioral health screenings and assistance. In February, we also introduced the Intercountry Adoption Advisory Committee Act to improve the intercountry adoption process.

Since National Adoption Day started in 2000, tens of thousands of children have been adopted. If only a few of them are adopted because this month and this day draw attention to that, that is certainly worth the effort we will make on the Senate floor this week to recognize this important month and to recognize next Saturday as National Adoption Day.

With that, I yield the floor.

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

Ms. HASSAN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that 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 result was announced—yeas 80, nays 15, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 360 Ex.]

YEAS—80

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

NAYS—15

Bennet	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Markey	Schumer
Cantwell	Merkley	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Murray	Van Hollen
Gillibrand	Rosen	Wyden

NOT VOTING—5

Booker	Klobuchar	Warren
Harris	Sanders	

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 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 Adrian Zuckerman, of New Jersey, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Romania.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Pat Roberts, James M. Inhofe, Chuck Grassley, Richard C. Shelby, Roger F. Wicker, John Cornyn, Cory Gardner, James Lankford, Mike Braun, John Hoeven, Roy Blunt, John Barrasso, James E. Risch, John Thune.

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 Adrian Zuckerman, of New Jersey, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Romania, 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. DURBIN. I announce that 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. DAINES). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 65, nays 30, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 361 Ex.]

YEAS—65

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

NAYS—30

Baldwin	Blumenthal	Cantwell
Bennet	Brown	Cardin

Casey	Kaine	Schumer
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Smith
Duckworth	Markey	Stabenow
Durbin	Merkley	Tester
Feinstein	Murray	Udall
Gillibrand	Peters	Van Hollen
Heinrich	Reed	Whitehouse
Hirono	Schatz	Wyden

NOT VOTING—5

Booker	Klobuchar	Warren
Harris	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 65, the nays are 30.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Adrian Zuckerman, of New Jersey, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Romania.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, as the ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, I can tell the Senate this morning that there is no higher priority for Senate Finance Democrats than the well-being of healthcare patients in this country and how strongly we feel about their having a right to good quality, affordable healthcare coverage.

Right now, too many of those folks are getting ripped off by an insurance lobbyist's dream—taxpayer-funded junk insurance—or by Big Pharma, which is always, always looking to engage in price gouging for one reason: They can get away with it. Take insulin. Insulin prices are up thirteenfold in recent years. The drug is not 13 times better. It is the same insulin that has been around for decades. But the reason the pharmaceutical companies do it is because they can get away with it.

This morning, I am going to take a few minutes and talk about what this really means for patients because I can tell you, this fall, there are a lot of families across this country who would rather be prepping for holidays than worrying about their healthcare. Unfortunately, the Trump administration is refusing to provide that kind of security for our patients.

To begin, let me tell you about a youngster in Oregon named Jasper. Jasper is 3, full of energy and love, and a big fan of playtime with cars and trucks and trains. He was born, however, with huge medical challenges—cystic fibrosis, cardiac and pancreatic problems, hearing loss. He needs a variety of treatments multiple times a day. It is so hard on Jasper's family. It is so

hard on Jasper. And, of course, the costs of Jasper's care are in the stratosphere. The family is fortunate to have health insurance through a parent's employer. They know how absolutely vital it is to have what they consider to be a lifeline—the protection of the Affordable Care Act.

At the heart of the Affordable Care Act are bedrock, ironclad protections for people like them—no discrimination by insurance companies against preexisting conditions. That was something we used to have some support for from the other side of the aisle. I know about that because I wrote a bipartisan bill that had airtight, loophole-free protection against what essentially was discrimination against those with preexisting conditions, and we got it into the Affordable Care Act.

Yet now we see the other side of the aisle trying to unravel those protections. They are trying to unravel the protection that we see for patients with respect to big expenses. Our approach has no annual or lifetime limits on coverage, no coverage denials that dragged people into bureaucratic nightmares, has young people covered on their parents' plan until age 26, and lots more. Those protections saved people's lives and made healthcare affordable for millions of Americans.

Unfortunately, with the support of my colleagues here on the other side in the Senate, the Trump administration wants to eliminate those protections that are so important to Jasper and families like his. My colleagues on the other side are standing by and basically doing nothing while the administration and Republican-led States are out there maneuvering in the courts to get the entire Affordable Care Act wiped out.

The so-called Texas case, which is an absurd lawsuit based on an absurd argument—an argument that wouldn't pass the smell test in a middle class school mock trial—somehow rightwing, ideological judges have kept it alive. Because this lawsuit keeps hanging around, tens of millions of Americans might lose their healthcare with hardly any warning and no fallback options to protect them.

Now Republicans have claimed they have fix-it bills they could pass in the event their allies took down the Affordable Care Act. They do read like they were written by the lawyers and the lobbyists on the payroll of the big insurance companies. If insurance companies can hike up the cost of treating a preexisting condition so high that it becomes unaffordable, it is no different from being denied coverage at the outset.

While the Texas case moves forward, the Trump administration is continuing to allow junk insurance scam artists to defraud Americans into buying worthless plans that aren't worth really the paper they are written on and certainly don't cover the healthcare Americans need.

I want to be very specific about it. This is an insurance lobbyist's dream.

You have tax breaks for junk insurance. That is on every insurance lobbyist's wish list for the holidays. I think it is federally funded fraud, plain and simple, but unfortunately it has the support of a lot of Republicans here in the Congress.

It is now the middle of the open enrollment period for health insurance on healthcare.gov. The Trump administration's support for junk plans has created a whole new burden for families across the country who are shopping for insurance.

I am particularly troubled by this because I remember what junk insurance used to be like. I was director of the senior citizens at home for almost 7 years before I was elected to the Congress, and those were the days when you could go around the country, whether it was Montana or Oregon or anywhere else, and fast-talking salesmen would sell 10, 15, sometimes 20 policies to supplement a senior's Medicare. They were called Medigap policies, and they were useless. Seniors should have saved that money to pay the rent and maybe make sure they had heat in their houses.

Finally, we got rid of those Medigap rip-off policies. When I came to the Congress, it was my top priority. We got it passed. It was a bipartisan proposal. But now junk plans are back. They are different from those Medigap rip-offs, but, much like what I battled when I was the head of the senior citizens in Oregon, they are still built around the same proposition. They are essentially worthless. They are an insurance lobbyist's dream. In the case of what we are dealing with—the administration gutting the Affordable Care Act—I think it is essentially Federal tax breaks for junk insurance, and that is why I think it is tantamount to federally funded fraud.

The Trump administration's support for junk plans has created a whole new burden for families across the country who are trying to shop for insurance that gives them real value. Those shoppers used to be able to trust that junk plans had actually been banned from the marketplace. Now those shoppers have to wade through Byzantine and manipulative marketing scams and incomprehensible insurance lingo to try to figure out if they are getting coverage that actually helps them or, as I have described too often, just worthless junk.

What is worse, the Trump administration actually redirects people looking for coverage from the healthcare.gov website to third-party brokers who can sell unsuspecting customers junk plans. I think it is astounding that the Trump administration has seen fit to heap another burden on vulnerable people. After we have called this administration out on it, they are not willing to do anything to correct it.

But unfortunately, since the beginning of the Trump administration—with the help of too many allies in the

Congress—it has been one attempt after another to take healthcare away from vulnerable Americans, from millions of vulnerable Americans, those like 3-year-old little Jasper and his family, that I started talking about at home in Oregon.

On a fundamental level, this is a debate about whether this country is going to go back to the days when healthcare was only for the healthy and wealthy. That was the way it worked, if the insurance companies could clobber somebody with a pre-existing condition. If you are healthy, it didn't matter. You did not have to worry. If you were wealthy, you just sat down and wrote out a check. That is the way it worked.

But when I came to the Senate, we put together a bipartisan bill, airtight, loophole-free protection for those with preexisting conditions. There are colleagues on the other side of the aisle who cosponsored my bill—and by the way, the President of the Senate knows who was the leader of that effort, one of his predecessors in the Utah delegation, the late Senator Bennet.

So this idea that we are just going to sit around and go back to the days when healthcare was for the healthy and wealthy, that is not acceptable to Finance Democrats that I have the honor to work with. It is not acceptable to any of us on this side, and it should not be acceptable to my colleagues in the Congress.

That is where Donald Trump wants to return to, the days when healthcare was for the healthy and wealthy. They have made it clear by working to eliminate preexisting condition protections in the Congress and the courts, by giving insurance lobbyists Federal tax breaks for junk insurance plans, and by seeking to slash health programs for the vulnerable.

I just want to make it clear that, on this side of the aisle, we are about patients. We are about protecting patients. We are about the proposition that in a country as strong and good and rich as ours—where we are going to spend \$3.5 trillion this year on healthcare, if you divide the number of Americans, like maybe 325 million into \$3.5 trillion, you could send every family of four in America a check for \$40,000. We are spending enough to take care of patients.

We ought to be doing more to protect, rather than turning back the clock on young people like Jasper and his family. I just wanted to make it clear, we will be on the floor talking about more patients in the days ahead and on the fight, a fight we are going to prosecute relentlessly, to protect those patients under the Affordable Care Act.

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I was walking by and heard Senator WYDEN—I do not usually sit over here—Senator WYDEN was speaking about healthcare. It is just so clear to me some of the

things that this body could be doing to bring down the cost of healthcare and to expand the number of people that have health insurance. I know, in my State, I worked with, I know, a friend of the Presiding Officer, Governor Kasich, a Republican—I am a Democrat—on expanding Medicaid in Ohio. In fact, after the Affordable Care Act, we now have 900,000 more people that have insurance.

But what I liked about what Senator WYDEN was saying was some of the things we could do in the future. It is clear to me, if we allowed the government to negotiate drug prices on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries, directly with the drug companies the way we do at the Veterans Administration, it could make a huge difference in drug costs.

We, in this body, a large part is because the drug company lobby refuses to do it.

Mr. WYDEN. If my colleague would yield?

Mr. BROWN. Yes.

MR. WYDEN. My colleague has been an enormous champion for consumers, and I just want to ask my colleague, didn't he and finance Democrats try in the Finance Committee to get rid of the restrictions on negotiating to do exactly what he is saying?

Mr. BROWN. Yes, that is exactly right. It should be an easy process. We know how to do it at the Veterans Administration. The cost is 40 or 50 percent of what typically is the cost a patient pays.

The other thing we could do—and we were this close to getting it in the Affordable Care Act, is giving people the option, at age 50 or 55, to buy into Medicare because, as Senator WYDEN knows, we all have in our States—whether it is Utah or Oregon or Ohio, we have 58-year-olds that lose their jobs or 62-year-olds that lose their jobs, and they cannot really often find insurance, or it is not affordable if they can. If they had the option to buy in—rather in a neutral way we built it into the Affordable Care Act, but lost in the end. We fell one vote short. But it would have made a huge difference in people being able to get through that.

I will never forget, I had a townhall in Youngstown some years ago. A woman stood up and said, "I'm 62 years old. I hold two jobs. I never had health insurance. I just want to stay alive until I'm 65." She did not say I want to stay alive to raise my grandkids or to take a trip. It was to stay alive so I can get on Medicare and get insurance, and that just should not be in this country.

Mr. WYDEN. My understanding—and, again, I have listened to my colleague on the Finance Committee. He is a champion on not going back, but going forward with more Medicare-type choices. Like making that person who is really wondering if they are going to make it until 65 in order to get to Medicare, he would like—for example, say an older woman who has been a victim of age discrimination, did not have much money, he would like to

make them eligible for Medicare at 60 or 61 or something like that.

Mr. BROWN. Absolutely—I thank Senator WYDEN—absolutely. Just give them that option. It is something we ought to be able to do. We can do it in a cost-effective way. In the end, it means fewer trips to the emergency room. In the end, it means a healthy population of people at those 10 years when they are more likely to get sick and more likely to need Medicare, but are not likely to be eligible.

I thank Senator WYDEN.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

REMEMBERING NATHAN LANE

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a Foreign Service Officer of the United States and a former Pearson Fellow in my office, who was tragically killed in an accident while serving his country abroad.

After serving in my office for a year-long fellowship, Nathan Lane was assigned to the Poland desk at the U.S. State Department here in Washington. Sadly, while on temporary duty in Poland, he was involved in a car accident. While he was initially hospitalized, his injuries proved too severe, and, surrounded by his loving family, he passed away on November 2.

Nathan was a committed public servant who joined the State Department in 2000 and served in nearly every corner of the globe. He and his wife Sara and, later, his son Peter travelled from Mexico, to Russia, to Belarus, to Vietnam, and finally to Kenya. After his assignment in Kenya, he had the “misfortune” to be assigned to my office through a Pearson Fellowship. Here, my team and I got to see his diligence and dedication every day firsthand.

During his time in my office, Nathan proved invaluable. His knowledge and expertise of foreign policy gave him a mastery of the portfolio, as revealed by his exceptionally researched policy papers on important international issues and matters that my team and I tackled in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Nathan’s understanding of the dynamics of foreign relations and his skills at compiling pertinent information allowed him to craft the soon-to-be-released report on China. This product of the Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and Cybersecurity Policy will be a comprehensive report on the activities of China in the Indo-Pacific region. Absent Nathan’s diligence and dedication, this report would not have been possible.

Additionally, Nathan drafted a resolution urging the formation of an unprecedented treaty alliance between the United States and Indo-Pacific nations to collectively guard against growing cyber threats. The Cyber League of Indo-Pacific States, or CLIPS, was Nathan’s brainchild. He was passionate about this idea and rightfully proud of this resolution, and my team and I are honored to carry on this torch.

Of course, Nathan contributed so much more than just policy expertise. His kind heart and curious nature made him a friend to my staff and me. He would readily help those around him, even with the smallest tasks, without a whisper of complaint and quickly fit in as one of the team.

Nathan had many passions beyond foreign policy. He loved chess, and every so often, we would catch him pulling up an ongoing game between times of busyness. He loved running, and it wasn’t uncommon for him to step away from his desk at a convenient time to go for a quick jog around Capitol Hill.

Perhaps his greatest passion, though, was baseball. Indeed, one of his most timeless contributions to our office was his membership of Coors & Corn, the joint softball team between Senator SASSE’s office and mine. We may not have won it all that year, but we certainly would not have stood a chance without Nathan. As we celebrate the World Series in Washington, Nathan was such a great Nats fan that, every time we cheer for that team, we will also be cheering for him.

He was one of a kind. He was cheerful, eager, and caring; his loss will be felt by all of us who knew him. I ask my colleagues to join me in praying for his family, his wife, and his son and commemorating the man who graced so many of us with his compassion.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2843

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019. This bill passed the House by a vote of 263 to 158, with 33 Republicans supporting it.

A week ago, along with every other Senate Democrat, I introduced the bill in the Senate. People on the frontlines helping these victims wrote this bill. This bill is not a Democratic bill. It is not a Republican bill. This bill is a survivors’ bill. It is written with the help of survivors who know what is needed in the real world.

The bill accomplishes two things. It preserves the advancements we made during the last reauthorization in 2013, and it includes certain meaningful improvements to the law. In particular, there are three key elements.

One, it expands jurisdiction over non-Native Americans for domestic violence offenses and crimes against children, elders, and law enforcement. Violence is a big problem on Tribal lands, and the best way to address it is to allow the Tribes themselves to pros-

ecute these crimes. Unfortunately, some, instead, want to circumvent the Tribal justice system that we know works, and this moves us in the wrong direction.

Secondly, the bill builds on existing antidiscrimination protections for the LGBT community. In the 2013 reauthorization, Congress declared that Federal grant recipients could use funds to train staff to recognize and combat discrimination against LGBT individuals. Unfortunately, the law wasn’t clear, and organizations are still uncertain if they can use funds for this purpose. This bill simply clarifies that intent. It is a small but very important change to help this at-risk community. There has been surprising resistance from some on the Republican side to include this modest language.

Third, our bill keeps guns out of the hands of domestic abusers. It does this by adding intimate partners and stalkers to the existing list of individuals who can be banned from possessing firearms. We know the presence of a firearm in a domestic violence situation increases the odds of a woman being killed by 500 percent. That is a major increase in risk. It only makes sense to take guns away from convicted domestic abusers who may use them to kill their spouses or partners.

There is simply no way to stop domestic violence, but I think we have a duty to do all we can, and this bill makes significant improvements in the law.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, no later than before the end of this year, the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 2843 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the only amendments in order be two germane amendments per side; that the debate on the bill be limited to 1 hour and amendments limited to 30 minutes each, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments; that upon the disposition of the amendments, the bill, as amended, if amended, be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage; and finally, that amendments and passage be subject to a 60-affirmative vote threshold, all with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I am reserving the right to object.

I am on the floor today to speak my piece about the Violence Against Women Act. I speak to this body not just as a Senator, but I speak to this body as a survivor of rape and as a survivor of domestic violence.

For months—for months—the senior Senator from California and I worked together on a piece of legislation that would reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, a bipartisan effort, an effort that brought the Senator and I together to reauthorize the bill with as much support in this body as possible.

We were working together in good faith to make our way through the issues that affect so many women in abusive situations, partners in abusive situations, domestic violence situations where children are involved, to find a common path forward to have this bill reauthorized, again, with as much support as possible in this body at a time when America views us as so politically divided.

What could bring us together? The issue of violence directed at women and children and survivors of sexual assault should bring us together.

Months of bipartisan effort—but there was pressure to immediately introduce the House-passed version of the Violence Against Women Act. We were moving ahead with steady progress in a number of these areas, but, again, there was political pressure to introduce the House-passed version of the bill, not one that we could come together with on the floor of this Senate but one that even the Democrats—in their release, in their press gaggle addressing the House version of Violence Against Women—said would never make it through the Senate. Why on Earth would we introduce a piece of legislation that will not make it through this body? Shouldn't we be working together to find a path forward?

We should continue to work on it. I sincerely hope that by the end of this year we can come together as Republicans and Democrats and not present a Republican version or a Democratic version but produce a version that will pass this body and protect those who are in a very vulnerable state. I have been in that vulnerable state before, and I appreciated the assistance that was given to me by folks who were funded by this piece of legislation.

So, with that, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Objection is heard.

The Senator from California has the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I would ask the Senator to yield for just a moment. I know we had some good discussions, and they broke off. I am very happy to continue to work on this. I felt it was important to enter the House bill because of the three very important provisions that I just went over, which are, in essence, the three improvements on the bill, if you will.

I have no problem sitting down now so that we can discuss it. If we could find a way that we can agree, I think that would be just fine. But in the interest of time and because there has been a substantial period of time, I just decided to introduce it. The three issues are Tribal sovereignty, the

LGBTQ people, and the gun provisions. Those are the three new House provisions.

I hope that Senator ERNST and I can sit down and discuss it. I would be very happy to do this—sit down and discuss, if she would like.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I truly appreciate the remarks by the senior Senator from California. I truly have enjoyed working on this piece of legislation.

There were three markers that were laid down within the House version of the bill as outlined previously, but there was no consensus there. It was, "Either accept these provisions or we don't work together."

We need to keep finding a way to get to consensus on a bill moving through this body, and I am happy to continue working on legislation with the Senator. I think, by the end of this year, we should find something that would work to reauthorize this very important piece of legislation, and I appreciate her leadership on this very much. I truly have enjoyed working with her.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. If I may, in response to the Senator—I am very happy to accept the invitation. We can sit down and continue to work on this, but I would point out that these three provisions have tremendous support: the Tribal sovereignty, the protections for the LGBT community, and spouse protections when a spouse has a weapon. Those are rather difficult over here. They were not in the House. But who knows? Maybe we can work something out, and I am happy to try.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, the Violence Against Women Act turned 25 years old this year. As many of us are aware, this law provides desperately needed resources to tackle domestic and sexual abuse in our communities. Folks, it needs to be reauthorized.

I wasn't in the Senate the last time this bill was passed back in 2013, and I wanted to be part of the process of getting the bill done this time around. As a woman, as a survivor, and as someone who volunteered at a women's shelter in college, I understand just how awful violence against women can be in terms of physical and mental well-being, self-image, our families, and security in the whole of society.

For months the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and I worked to develop a bipartisan proposal that I really thought could get across the finish line. Folks, as that old "Schoolhouse Rock" video says: Without passing the House, the Senate, and getting a signature from the President, all you have is a bill, just a bill, not a law. And no survivors are helped by a bill.

Here we are today, after months of work and mountains of effort that

went toward working on a bipartisan bill, and at some point someone pressed the big red button of partisan politics, and the Democrats refused to work together any longer, walking away from the real progress we had made. Not only did they walk away from the negotiating table, but they did so by dropping a bill that is going nowhere, as they have acknowledged.

The Senate Democrats' bill is a non-starter. It will not pass the Senate. It will not get the President's signature. Most importantly, it will not actually help the survivors who need it.

These politics are sad. We should be helping survivors, not engaging in the kinds of partisan antics that will never produce real results. We have seen this before. The Democrats will say that Republican women can't speak for women because we don't agree point by point with their leftist agenda. These are worn-out tactics, my friends.

However, despite the minority's decision to walk away and put politics ahead of survivors, I am leading our effort to continue getting a bill done that focuses on providing the resources and support survivors across the country need for women and children in urban and rural areas like mine.

My goal has always been to empower survivors, to punish abusers, and to enhance the overall purpose behind this very important law. That is why, this week, I plan to put forward a bill that puts survivors first. We have included a number of issues Senate Democrats failed to address. For example—and this should be so simple, folks—we are holistically addressing female genital mutilation. We have tripled the amount of funding that is available for education and sexual assault prevention. We also focus more on enhancing the penalties for abusers.

As a matter of fact, one of the most objectionable and unacceptable items in the Senate Democratic bill is that they allow accused abusers to go outside of the justice system and negotiate directly with their victim—with their victim—those women, those abused survivors who have already been manipulated and beat down. It allows those abusers to negotiate directly with their victims to avoid jail time; that is, of course, as long as the victim consents, as if an abusive relationship ever involved consent—outside of the justice system, folks, outside of the justice system. It is unimaginable that we would allow or fund such an abusive system or abusive situation and allow abusers to escape justice. I think abusers should face justice, and I am not sure why our Senate Democratic colleagues don't agree.

Coming from a rural area of our country, I made sure we prioritized rural resources in our bill. We are offering increased funding for housing assistance so that women and children can be safe from their abusers. When living in an area like mine—rural Montgomery County, Red Oak, IA—the nearest shelter is an hour away. You

have virtually cut off a woman and her children from any job she might have, any family she might have, and it truly takes them out of their life. By offering these housing resources through voucher programs, our bill enables them to rent an apartment or home in their home community.

Imagine what we could do in this body if we worked with a single purpose instead of a dozen different motives. Imagine this entire body pulling together with a single purpose, focusing on assisting those survivors.

I welcome the support of all of my colleagues for my bill—Democrats and Republicans—and I hope we can all join together in this effort. How many more violent abusers can we put behind bars to keep survivors safe? How many more people would be alive today?

I want to thank my colleagues for joining me today to speak on the importance of the Violence Against Women Act. I want to send the message to the countless survivors across this country: We are with you. We hear you, and we are working for you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would like to begin by thanking our friend and colleague from Iowa, Senator ERNST, for her leadership on the reauthorization and—indeed, I think the important point should be made—to strengthen the Violence Against Women Act. We don't have to settle for the House bill. We can have a better bill for victims of domestic violence. Unfortunately, like so much important work, we seem constantly to get diverted and distracted and dragged down by the partisanship that seems to dominate Washington, DC, these days. For many months, our colleague from Iowa has been working closely with Senator FEINSTEIN from California to try to figure a way to reauthorize this critical law.

In the meantime, though, not on one occasion but on two occasions, we have offered a continuing resolution that would extend the current reauthorization and our Democratic colleagues have shut that down. So we are in uncharted territory where we don't currently have an authorization for the Violence Against Women Act.

I shared our colleague's disappointment when our Democratic colleagues walked away from the negotiating table and chose to introduce a replica of the House's partisan bill, which as you have heard, does not have the support to pass in the Senate. Let me say one thing that should be abundantly clear but sometimes I think it gets lost: We all agree that more must be done to prevent violence and respond to it. It is fair to say that we have different opinions on what those pathways look like, but one thing that should not be up for debate is whether or not we reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. That is something we need to do.

The fact is that we don't have to settle for the House bill. We can do better. Our Democratic colleagues took an interesting approach in introducing a bill that a majority of people in this Chamber will not support, and they know that. Sadly, that is part of the point. They know they have a bill that does not enjoy consensus support because they would rather make the political point and argument that somehow some of us on this side don't believe in supporting victims of domestic violence, which is absolutely a falsehood. It is a lie. During a press conference, the Senator from Hawaii even conceded five times that the House bill is going nowhere, but that is the path our Democratic colleagues have chosen. Rather than working in a bipartisan fashion to build a consensus package that could actually become law, they decided to head down a partisan path led by the House bill, which came to us 7 months ago.

Clearly, some of our colleagues here in the Senate are not interested in actually making laws. They are in it for the headlines, for the politics. In the face of this ridiculous and unacceptable jockeying, I am glad that today Senator ERNST will introduce a consensus alternative to the bill offered by our colleagues, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of the legislation. This bill introduced by the Senator from Iowa will send more funding and more resources to the Violence Against Women Act than the Democrats' bill. It is actually better and will authorize a program for twice as long. It will give the Department of Justice the stability it needs to plan for the future without being jerked around by partisan gains.

This bill includes a lot more than just funding. It also addresses a number of horrific crimes that are being committed against women and girls in our country. Sex trafficking, for example, is currently not always recognized as a form of sexual assault—and it is—but this bill would make that clear. It would also enhance the maximum criminal penalties for sexual abuse of minors and other vulnerable groups. It will, as you heard, take aim at heinous crimes like mutilation and address crimes in rural areas and on Tribal lands. This legislation includes provisions from a number of bipartisan bills that have been introduced in the Senate to both improve resources for victims and target specific types of abuse.

One example is a bill I introduced with the Senator from California, my friend Senator FEINSTEIN, called the HEALS Act, which will remove some of the hurdles that exist between victims of domestic violence and their access to safe housing. That is in our bill. This provision would also include greater flexibility for transitional housing programs so that survivors can get back on their feet without the fear of losing the roof over their head.

This bill includes language introduced by Senators MURKOWSKI and CORTEZ MASTO to combat the epidemic of

murdered and missing Native women and girls. It will allow for better law enforcement coordination and provide local and Tribal law enforcement with more resources to address these crimes. It is critical that we all call attention to these despicable acts of violence and unequivocally reject them without regard to partisanship or party.

Another challenge we face is technology outpacing our ability to counter certain types of exploitation. Abusive images and videos proliferate online, for example. This is a relatively new challenge, but it is real and it is omnipresent. This legislation will empower victims of this type of abuse to remove the content from the internet by using copyright takedown authority. It also establishes an innovation fund for the Office on Violence Against Women to address emerging trends so victims can get the support they need as quickly as possible.

If you compare this legislation to the bill passing the House and introduced by our Democratic colleagues here, there is no question that our version does more to support survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. It provides more funding over a longer period of time, and it targets despicable crimes that are being committed across the country that aren't even covered by the House bill.

Let me just close by thanking our friend from Iowa for continuing to fight for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and for leading the effort to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. It is a bill that never should have lapsed, despite two attempts to continue it that our Democratic colleagues objected to. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill and look forward to working with all of our colleagues to advance it. I hope our colleagues will return to the negotiation table and work with us so we can send a long-term reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act to the President's desk for his signature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues from Iowa, Texas, and Alaska in calling for the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, or VAWA. VAWA was foundational to addressing domestic violence and sexual assault and supporting survivors in their recovery.

VAWA expired earlier this year, and it is critical that the services and tools offered through the law are reauthorized so we can continue to help and empower survivors. Additionally, it is important that we make it known that crimes of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking are not tolerated.

Senator ERNST will be introducing this legislation, which I am cosponsoring, to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. This bill includes key Tribal provisions, such as expanding Tribal criminal jurisdiction and upholding Tribal sovereignty while

amending the 2013 VAWA, and providing increased funding for Indian Tribes to address violence committed against Indians on their lands.

A Department of Justice report found that more than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women experience violence in their lifetime, and Native women are significantly more likely to experience cases of stalking and physical violence by an intimate partner.

Under Senator ERNST's VAWA bill, Indian Tribes will be allowed to train more lawyers and Tribal court judges, further strengthening the Tribal criminal justice system; have access to increased data and reporting on the subject of missing and murdered Indians; and will require the Department of Justice to issue annual reports to Congress in order to thoroughly track the progress of the special criminal jurisdiction and better determine trends of violence committed on Indian lands.

The Committee on Indian Affairs has held hearings on violence against Indians and missing and murdered Native Americans. As chairman of the committee, I introduced legislation that would increase resources to Indian victims of crime. The Senate majority VAWA includes my SURVIVE Act, which would provide Indian Tribes with a 5-percent Tribal set aside of the Crime Victims Fund. Prior to our work on this initiative, Tribes were accessing less than 1 percent of this important funding. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I have included a Tribal set-aside in the three previous fiscal years of criminal justice science packages, which underscores the importance of passing authorizing language, such as my SURVIVE Act.

This VAWA bill also includes Savanna's Act, a bill I am cosponsoring, named for Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind, a pregnant woman from the Spirit Lake Nation in my home State who went missing and was found murdered 8 days later. Savanna's tragic death did not go unnoticed and has helped to raise awareness about missing and murdered Native American women. Savanna's Act will help to address cases of missing or murdered Indians by directing the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and criminal justice guidelines; improving access to Federal criminal databases; holding Tribal consultations with Indian Tribes, Tribal Organizations, and Urban Indian Organizations when the Department of Justice develops and implements guidelines; requiring training and technical assistance to Indian Tribes participating in the guidelines implementation process; and mandating data collection and reporting by the Department of Justice.

The Senate majority VAWA includes these important Tribal bills, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of Senator ERNST's bill. There are many great provisions in this VAWA bill, and I hope my colleagues on the other side of the

aisle will give it serious consideration. We must act to reauthorize VAWA in order to help support survivors and provide them with the assistance they need to recover. Reauthorizing VAWA also sends the important message that crimes of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking are not tolerated in this country, and that we will continue to support survivors.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I want to join my colleagues here on the importance of the VAWA reauthorization. In particular, I want to thank Senator ERNST for her months of hard work that she has put into this bill that we are introducing today. I am a proud cosponsor on that bill.

You saw in her remarks earlier her passion, her energy, and her focus on rural America, which is very important to me and my great State of Alaska. I am hopeful, as all of my colleagues here are, including our friend from California, Senator FEINSTEIN, that we in the Senate are going to get to a place where we can have a bipartisan bill that is going to reauthorize VAWA. This is hugely important for America, and it is hugely important for Alaska.

I come down to the floor every week and I talk about someone who is doing something great in my State. I like to brag about the great State of Alaska. It is an amazing place, but, I will tell you, there is one area where we are not so amazing. My State, unfortunately, has the highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault of any State in America. It is horrendous. The number of victims and the carnage that this leaves in Alaska and throughout our country are something we should be able to come together and fix. We can do this.

I want to talk about a provision in Senator ERNST's bill that is something that I have been working on with her, but, importantly, with many Senators, including a lot of my Democratic colleagues. It is title XII of the bill. It is called the "Choose Respect" title. This is a series of bills that I have introduced with Senators GILLIBRAND, HARRIS, and COONS, my Democratic colleagues, and it is focused on trying to change the culture and get more legal resources to victims and to survivors.

Why is that so important? When you look at the studies that show what is the best way for a survivor to break out of the cycle of violence that they often find themselves in, one of the answers is to get them an attorney. It empowers them. It enables them to use the justice system to their advantage. Yet here is the problem. When you look—literally, on a daily basis—at the lack of legal representation for victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, it is endemic across the country. So a number of the elements of this bill, particularly under the "Choose Respect" title, are going to try to change this.

Last year, we had legislation that I authored that was passed into law and was then signed by the President. It was called the POWER Act and was about getting more legal resources for survivors. It was a good start, but it didn't do enough. The bill this year—again, a bill that I cosponsored earlier with Senator HARRIS of California—focuses on this issue.

Think about this: If you have an accused abuser—let's say an accused rapist—and if there is an indictment, under the Sixth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, that perpetrator gets a right to counsel. OK. That is our Constitution. That is fine. What does the victim get? What does the survivor get? Right now, the victim gets nothing. Far too often, victims go without any legal representation, and that is often the beginning of a cycle they fall into.

One of the provisions of this would be, once there is an indictment of a crime of violence, that the Federal Government would help to ensure the goal of having the victim also get an attorney through State domestic violence counsels. These are just some of the elements of this bill.

Senator GILLIBRAND and I have legislation that is part of this. It is called the Choose Respect Act, which would have a public advocacy program to try to get young men in particular to start changing our culture. It is not just a problem in Alaska; it is a problem throughout the country.

There are many things in this bill that are very bipartisan, and I certainly am committed to working with Senator CORNYN, Senator HOEVEN, Senator BLACKBURN, Senator FEINSTEIN, and Senator ERNST in order to get to the compromises we need to make in the Senate to pass this bill. That is what we want to have done. That is why we are all here on the floor, talking about this passionately. I think we can do it because it is too important to miss this opportunity to pass legislation that is going to help some of the most vulnerable people in our country and in my State, and I am certainly committed to working with everybody here to make it happen.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to complete my remarks before the vote.

NOMINATION OF ADRIAN ZUCKERMAN

Mr. President, I also ask that in relation to the Zuckerman nomination, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I am so pleased to stand with Senator ERNST and my colleagues today to talk about the 2019 Violence Against Women Act.

Most women will tell you that they know of a female friend or acquaintance or relative who has experienced the horrors of sexual assault or domestic violence or even trafficking. Through my work with shelters back home in Tennessee, I have learned that the volunteers, the counselors, the advocates, and the attorneys who support these victims are of the utmost importance. They are who the victims need to see the minute they walk through that door, into their arms, and hear them say: How can we help you? This is a safe place.

These are the people who come around them to empower them, and the one thing I hear over and over in the wake of one's attack is that these victims need that type of support. This is why, in addition to providing funding for both prevention and educational programs, this year's authorization will do some important things. It will increase funding for the court-appointed special advocates by \$3 million. It will provide over \$1 million per year for Federal victim counselors. It will also help to provide transitional housing to victims, which is something they will desperately need. They need to know they have a safe place.

These resources—and this is important—are going to go directly into the hands of those who are providing these services, and this will have a direct impact on the lives of these women when they need it the most.

Just for a moment, I would like to highlight a portion of the reauthorization on which I have spent a good deal of time working this year. It has to do with a particular violent sexual crime that is so grotesque that most Americans prefer not to even acknowledge it. They don't want to admit that this exists. Yet, for the victims of female genital mutilation, the pain and the humiliation are nearly unbearable.

You would think that Federal prosecutors would be able to make short work out of such heinous charges, but due to a loophole in Federal criminal law, scores of victims have watched their abusers walk free. The Federal Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act of 2019, which is a separate bill that I sponsored earlier this year, is now a part of this year's reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. It will correct fatal constitutional flaws in the Federal statute that bans the practice of FGM. When this is done, under Federal law, prosecutions for mutilation and cutting will be able to continue.

I would be remiss if I did not say that in a perfect world, we would not have to worry about allocating resources for safe houses and for victim counseling. We should not have to do this, but this is not a perfect world. So, yes, indeed, we do have to step up and do this for the sake of the thousands of women who fall victim to sexual violence, trafficking, and sexual abuse each year.

I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to come together and

work on this. Let's pass the 2019 Violence Against Women Act.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON ZUCKERMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All postcloture time has expired.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that 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. COTTON). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 65, nays 30, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 362 Ex.]

YEAS—65

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

NAYS—30

Baldwin	Feinstein	Reed
Bennet	Gillibrand	Schatz
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Schumer
Brown	Hirono	Smith
Cantwell	Kaine	Stabenow
Cardin	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—5

Booker	Klobuchar	Warren
Harris	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

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

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session for the consideration of Calendar No. 503.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Dan R. Brouillette, of Texas, to be Secretary of Energy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, last week, my colleague Senator BLUMENTHAL stood on the floor of this Chamber to talk about the epidemic of gun violence in our country. Gun violence is an issue that hits close to home for my friend from Connecticut.

Seven years ago, his home State was the site of one of the most horrific acts of gun violence anyone can imagine. A young man armed with an assault rifle opened fire in Sandy Hook Elementary School, murdering 20 first graders and 6 adults.

While he spoke on the floor of this Senate, Senator BLUMENTHAL was handed a note informing him that, at that very moment, an active shooter was on the loose at another school—this one in Santa Clarita, CA. This marked the 243rd instance of gun violence at a school in this country since the massacre at Columbine High School in 1999. Sadly, today, school shootings have become almost routine and commonplace. It has gotten to the point that students are fearful but, sadly, not surprised when a shooting occurs at their school.

Following an attack last year at Santa Fe High School in Texas that killed eight students and two teachers, 17-year-old student Paige Curry was asked whether there was a part of her that couldn't believe this happened at her school. Her response was heart-breaking. She said:

There wasn't.

She said:

It's been happening everywhere. I've always felt it would eventually happen here too.

This is the country we now live in: a country where we have more guns than we have people; a country where a mass shooting—that is a shooting involving the death or injury of four or more victims—occurs, on average, more than once every day; a country where school shootings occur frequently enough that students feel it will eventually happen at their own school.

This is not the country any of us should want to live in. Yet the U.S. Senate—one of the few institutions

that can actually do something to help prevent gun violence—does nothing. Gun violence kills 100 people in our country every day—every day. That is 3,000 people a month and 36,000 people a year.

This is a crisis, but my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are not treating it like one. Perhaps looking at the numbers—100 people dying every day—is just way too abstract.

How would the majority leader react if the entire population of Sparta, KY—all 231 residents—disappeared in less than 3 days?

How would the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee react if all 128 residents of Livingston, SC, disappeared in a little over a day?

How would my colleagues from Texas react if Bartlett's 2,600 residents were killed in just under a month?

This is the scale of what is happening in our country every single day, week, and year. This is a crisis, and it is past time Senate Republicans start treating it like one.

Here is what we can do right now. We can join the House in passing H.R. 8, a bill that would close loopholes in the background check system. More than 90 percent of the American public supports this bill. Although it passed the House 266 days ago—almost a year ago—the majority leader refuses to even bring the bill to the Senate floor for a vote.

We can also pass S. 66, which would reinstitute the Federal assault weapons ban that expired in 2004. I have joined Senator FEINSTEIN and 34 of my colleagues in cosponsoring this commonsense measure, but the Republican majority refuses to hold a hearing or otherwise consider it.

We can finally pass an extreme risk protection order bill that would allow police or family members to petition a court to remove firearms from people who may be a danger to themselves or to others, and despite repeated promises after each mass shooting that we will get a vote, the vote never comes.

We all know none of these bills alone will end gun violence in our country, but they will help keep guns out of the hands of those who are a danger to themselves and others. They will make those guns that remain available for sale far less lethal. In other words, the bills will make us safer.

Republicans refuse to take any of these commonsense steps. Instead, they cower before the NRA, an organization that carries favor with gun manufacturers and gun rights extremists by opposing seemingly every piece of gun safety legislation that is introduced; this, in spite of the fact that a strong majority of the NRA's claimed 5 million members actually support stronger gun safety protections.

We all remember the aftermath of the Sandy Hook massacre, where it seemed for a brief moment Congress might pass a gun safety bill for the first time in a generation. Senators MANCHIN and TOOMEY introduced a

modest background check proposal that actually came to the Senate floor for a vote, but what happened? The NRA came out against the bill, and nearly every Republican Member of the Senate fell in line to defeat it.

The vote came in the aftermath of a shooting that took the lives of 20 innocent elementary school children, and my Republican colleagues chose to side with the NRA and its \$50-plus million in campaign donations.

Today those first graders who were killed would be in the eighth grade, and yet we still haven't passed a background check law. We have seen the NRA block commonsense gun safety bills time and again. Most recently, President Trump voiced support for strengthening background checks in the wake of mass shootings in El Paso, Dayton, and Gilroy. He tweeted that "Republicans and Democrats must come together and get strong background checks."

Days later, he spoke on the phone with the NRA executive vice president and CEO Wayne LaPierre and quickly changed his tune. Suddenly, our loophole-ridden background system became "very, very strong," to quote the President. He no longer saw a need for additional legislation.

The President of the United States is often called the most powerful man in the world. Yet, in the face of opposition from the NRA, Donald Trump proved himself anything but.

Like so many people across the country, I am angry and frustrated that Republicans in Congress seem to care more about satisfying the NRA than taking commonsense steps to keep our communities safe.

Every day that Republicans in Congress refuse to act costs lives. In the 6 days following the November 14 shooting in which two people were killed and three others wounded at Saugus High School, there have been at least four more mass shootings.

On November 16, five were killed and one wounded in a murder-suicide in Paradise Hills, CA. On November 17, four were killed and an additional six were wounded when gunmen opened fire at a backyard party at Fresno, CA. That same day, four were injured when a gunman fired shots into a home outside Cleveland, OH. On November 18, one was killed and four injured in a shooting in Newark, NJ.

These shootings happen quickly—16 seconds in the case of the Saugus High School shooting in Santa Clarita. This is hardly enough time to expect the proverbial "good guy with a gun" to protect innocent men, women, and children caught in the line of fire.

Failing to take decisive action to confront the crisis of gun violence in our country makes the Senate complicit in its continuation. Instead of making more excuses for the Senate's inaction, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle should stop hiding behind the NRA and join us in passing commonsense gun safety legislation that will save lives.

As our country endures mass shooting after mass shooting, I have to ask, at what point do we say, "Enough"? When will my Republican colleagues turn their backs on the NRA's leadership, listen to the 90 percent of the American people and the rank-and-file NRA members who join them, and pass gun safety laws? The cost of continued inaction is far too high.

I say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: Wake up. What is it going to take? What is it going to take?

I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today as the 2020 Democratic Presidential candidates prepare to debate this evening. We are sure to hear once again about their proposals for massive taxing and spending. At the top of the list is their \$34 trillion Medicare for All, which is really a one-size-fits-all healthcare scheme for the people of our country. Here is the key point. Democrats will dramatically raise taxes on all Americans. One candidate plans to increase taxes on working families by \$26 trillion over the next year—that is new taxes—new taxes—of \$26 trillion. This candidate also proposes an additional \$2 trillion on top of the \$26 trillion by hiring an army of IRS agents to crack down on hard-working Americans who this one candidate, as a Member of this body, says can actually pay more and are not paying their full share. So Americans will pay \$28 trillion more in taxes over a decade. Do not be deceived. These taxes will hit all Americans.

Democrats know they can't win this election on policy. Specifically, they are dangerous Democratic socialist policies that they are going to be promoting in the debate tonight. So what are they doing? Well, they are counting on their totally partisan impeachment process. We have been hearing all about it now for months—actually, for years.

Democrats have been obsessed with impeaching—impeaching—President Trump since day one, the day he was elected. Then fast forward to his inauguration in 2017. The campaign to impeach President Trump, starting from the day he was elected, really took force the day he was sworn into office.

Democrats want to overturn the last election, and they want to interfere with the upcoming election. Election day 2020 is now less than a year away. Still, Democrats' impeachment obsession continues to burn on.

This is an unfair, bitterly partisan process. I will tell you, the Americans I talk to at home in Wyoming see right through it. When I talk to my colleagues around the country, their constituents at home see right through it as well.

Recent polling shows that the public wants the voters—not House Democrats and not Speaker PELOSI—to make

their own call on election day. The Democrats, meanwhile, seem to prefer impeachment to doing the work of the American people—the work all of us were elected to do.

Republicans prefer to work on the issues we were elected to address: jobs, the economy, and our Nation's security. We are going to continue to work for the people who elected us.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. President, on another matter, I come to the floor as we approach another government funding deadline. The fact is, it is already past time to fund the government, especially our military.

Republicans have worked all year to complete the annual appropriations process and to get it done on time. Here is the problem: Republicans can't pass the annual funding bills alone. We need cooperation from the Democrats. We need the House Democrats' cooperation, and here in the Senate, we need to clear the 60-vote hurdle. So we need Senate Democrats to be involved in the process as well. But Democrats prefer impeachment grandstanding rather than governing. That is what we are facing here today.

We are nearly 2 months into fiscal year 2020, and we have yet to pass any of the 2020 funding bills. The government has been running under what is called a short-term continuing resolution. This current continuing resolution is set to expire Thursday—tomorrow. We will, undoubtedly, pass another stopgap continuing resolution this week, but these are only a temporary fix. They are needed to keep the government's lights on but at last year's funding levels. Meanwhile, there is no end in sight to Democrats' 3-year-long impeachment obsession. Their impeachment fever rages on.

They are so consumed by this bitterly partisan process that they cannot focus on the priorities of the American people. They are too consumed to fix our aging roads and bridges, too obsessed to pass "America First" trade deals, and too fixated to fund the government on time. Above all, people expect us to fully fund defense—the defense of our Nation. Yet the Democrats continue to stonewall.

Republicans are fighting to fully fund the military; Democrats are waging war on the Commander in Chief. Remember, both parties came to the table and completed a bipartisan budget deal this past summer. The deal meant that we could fund the government on time. The deal supported critical defense funding to keep our Nation safe, and it included a major pay raise for our troops.

So what happened? It is pretty clear. The Democrats went back on their word. And in so doing, they broke faith with the American people and broke faith with our troops—those in harm's way today.

Back at home in Wyoming, a deal is a deal. Your word means something. A handshake means something. You

never go back on your word, certainly not when you make promises to our men and women in uniform. Nevertheless, the Democrats have since poisoned the well with unreasonable partisan demands. They are tying our Americans' hands, repeatedly blocking key defense votes. Democrats filibuster and Democrats impeach while neglecting the troops.

U.S. forces, meanwhile, are facing heightened threats with last year's funding levels. The fact is, while necessary, these continuing resolutions take a real toll on our military. The current CR means a \$22 billion cut from this summer's bipartisan budget deal when it comes to our troops. It is harming military readiness and harming military training.

The CR has also delayed new weapons programs, and it has suspended existing weapons programs. These include hypersonic strike weapons, missile defense systems, and new fighters and ships.

Our adversaries—most notably Iran, China, and Russia—pose a grave, growing threat to our Nation. That hasn't stopped House and Senate Democrats from blocking both the Defense authorization and funding bills. Right now they are blocking both.

The National Defense Authorization Act, which is the authorizing bill, has passed and been signed every year since 1961. That is when John Kennedy was President of the United States—1961.

The NDAA has a long history of strong bipartisan support. Yet, right now, House Democrats are delaying final passage of our National Defense Authorization Act. Again, they are blocking the House's spending bill for our military, even though it gives our troops a well-earned pay raise.

Like the Presiding Officer, I frequently visit our troops overseas. I did so last month. We have a number of Wyoming National Guard members deployed around the world, and it is always an honor to spend time with them.

Most recently, I visited Wyoming troops deployed in the Middle East and in Kosovo. The Wyoming guard is about 400 members overseas. It is our State's largest deployment in a decade. As I noted at this year's American Legion Post 6 Veterans Day celebration in Cheyenne, WY, these troops will be away from home for Thanksgiving; they will be away from home for Christmas; and they will be away from home for New Year's as well.

Both my dad and my father-in-law served overseas. My dad fought in Europe in World War II in the pivotal Battle of the Bulge, the 75th anniversary of which is coming up next month. My father-in-law fought in both theaters during World War II and also served in the Korean war.

The U.S. Armed Forces are on the frontlines. They are defending our freedoms, and they are doing it every single day. They make this sacrifice 365 days a year, and they do it to protect

us, to protect our freedom, and to protect our Nation. U.S. servicemembers never quit. They don't complain, and we don't quit on them when they need us the most.

Our troops deserve our full support right now, and, clearly, that support must be bipartisan. Yet Democrats remain too obsessed to do the work of the Nation. People elected them to do a job, and those people are nowhere to be found.

Think about it. Democrats are fast-tracking impeachment and filibustering the defense funding bill. How can they do that in good conscience? Instead of funding certainty, we have an impeachment circus.

Republicans are committed to work on policy priorities for the people who elected us. It is time for Democrats to stop the stonewalling. Let's give our troops the state-of-the-art tools they need and the raise they deserve and have earned.

Democrats need to get their priorities in order. Defense should be top of the list. It is past time to keep our promises to the military. It is past time to give the troops a well-earned and well-deserved pay raise, and it is past time to fund the defense of our Nation and to fund our government.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

PENSIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the financial crisis facing the private sector multiemployer pension system calls for comprehensive reform and getting it done soon.

The crisis is severe and growing worse every day. Would you believe about 125 multiemployer plans are in so-called critical and declining financial status? These plans report that they will become insolvent over the next two decades. There will be a lot of people without a retirement plan if we don't act.

Several large plans, including the United Mine Workers Pension Fund and the large Central States Pension Fund, predict these plans will become insolvent in the next few years. That is not a very comfortable environment for those retirees.

This will leave more than 1.3 million participants without the pension benefits they have been promised and, of course, worked for probably throughout their whole lives.

In just my State of Iowa, the benefits of close to 10,000 participants of multiemployer plans are at risk if the system fails. Ten thousand Iowans being affected by what we do or don't do, obviously, gets my attention. That figure of 10,000 will represent over \$70 million in benefits paid out annually that these individuals rely on in retirement.

More broadly, another large group of multiemployer plans are in critical status. They report that no realistic combination of contribution increases or allowable benefit reductions—options available under the current law

to address their financial condition—will enable these plans to emerge from their current, poorly funded financial condition. So it is very important that Congress act to save these retirement plans. These plans cover millions more workers and retirees across the Nation, and those workers and retirees face significant benefit cuts under existing law.

We should also be concerned about the financial health of the Federal insurance system that backs up these retirement benefits. The Federal insurance system goes by the name of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. The PBGC's multiemployer pension program may itself become insolvent if only one or possibly two larger multiemployer plans fail.

One of these plans, the United Mine Workers, just lost its last large contributing employer to bankruptcy. Without reforms, the Federal guaranty system, the PBGC, reports it will be insolvent no later than 2026. When that happens, the PBGC will not be able to pay either current or future retirees more than a very small fraction of the benefits they have been promised.

Consequently, substantial reductions in retirement income are a very real possibility for the millions of workers and retirees who depend on benefits from these plans. We need to act very soon to protect the hard-earned pension benefits of the workers who participate in these plans.

As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, I am on the floor today to join with Chairman ALEXANDER from the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee to release a responsible reform plan to address the immediate financial challenges of a number of plans in critical financial condition and also at the same time to secure the multiemployer pension system over the long term, not just a quick fix that is going to last a short period of time.

As we looked at options for reforming the current system, we relied on several important reform principles. I will go through these principles.

First, a reform plan should provide balanced assistance to the most poorly funded plans.

The second principle is that Federal assistance to the failing plans should rely on as little taxpayer dollars as possible.

The third principle is that reforms must promote long-term stability of the multiemployer pension system and the long-term solvency of the PBGC.

To help the sickest plans recover their financial footing, our proposal creates a special partition option for multiemployer plans.

I want everybody to know that this is not a new concept. In fact, quite simply, it expands on the PBGC's existing authority. It is based on banking industry reforms that Congress enacted after the Great Depression and at other times.

The partition option permits employers to maintain a financially healthy

multiemployer plan by carving out pension benefit liabilities owed to participants who have been "orphaned" by employers who have exited the plan without paying their full share of those liabilities. By removing these liabilities, we allow the original plan to continue to provide benefits in a self-sustaining manner by funding benefits with contributions from current participating employers. In effect, partitioning creates a healthy pension that continues to meet all of its obligations to retirees and a separate "sick pension" that requires attention and assistance from the PBGC.

For this partition program to operate effectively and address the plans that are in immediate danger, a limited amount of Federal taxpayer funds will be needed to support the PBGC. We expect the necessary Federal resources to comprise only a small—I should say very small—portion of the financial assistance provided to the faltering multiemployer plans, and it is our intent, as we should be fiscally responsible, to offset those costs.

We should also acknowledge the reality that action right now means lower taxpayer involvement than if we wait for the PBGC to become insolvent, which would lead to a far larger commitment of taxpayer funds in the not too distant future. Congress needs to be ahead of the real catastrophe we know is coming.

Over the long run, the reforms we are proposing will be sustained primarily by shared-sacrifice funding reforms and a new premium structure for all stakeholders of the multiemployer plans.

Because taxpayer dollars would be at risk if the sickest plans fail to move to fully funded status, the proposal also includes a number of plan-governance reforms to strengthen multiemployer plans, to protect the taxpayers' contributions to the overall reforms, and to shield taxpayers from future risks.

While partitioning addresses one element needed for reform, Senator ALEXANDER and I propose to go a step further to make significant changes to the management and operation of all multiemployer pension plans. This is something that should have been done years ago so that plan trustees would have had to act in a responsible way, and maybe we wouldn't be where we are today, but we want to make sure this doesn't happen in the future. If we go that way—and we must go that way—moving forward, the entire multiemployer pension system will be better funded and more transparent to participants, to sponsoring employers, and to government regulators.

Providing relief to critical and declining plans is contingent on making changes to the legal framework of the multiemployer pension system to ensure that all plans operate, as people would expect, in a financially sound way in the future.

To help finance the partition relief and to provide a stronger PBGC insurance guarantee to participants in the

system, our reform proposal creates a new premium structure. That structure includes raising the flat-rate premium to \$80 per participant in a multiemployer plan, putting the multiemployer program on par with a single-employer guarantee program. The new premium structure also broadens the base on which premiums are assessed to more equitably spread the cost of insuring benefits and to ensure PBGC solvency. The new structure applies a copayment to active workers and retirees. However, because of the broader contribution base, the copayments are significantly less than the amount of the typical benefit cuts retirees face under current law if their plan should fail. Older retirees and disabled participants will also be protected.

In addition, our reform package establishes a variable-rate premium. This variable-rate premium, which parallels the variable-rate premium that has long applied to single-employer plans, is tied to a plan's funding status to manage risks stemming from more poorly funded plans. This also creates an incentive for plans to improve their funding over time.

The new premium structure not only helps to secure the finances of the PBGC but also funds an increase in the guaranteed benefit level for the vast majority of participants in the system. Raising the guaranteed benefit will greatly reduce the risk to retirees of significant reductions in retirement income, which would otherwise occur if their multiemployer plan becomes insolvent.

While the changes to the premium structure will fundamentally strengthen the financial status of the multiemployer pension system and the PBGC, the reforms we are proposing make other important structural changes to the multiemployer system to help ensure that the entire system moves to a well-funded status over the long haul.

We achieve this goal by addressing key flaws in the current legal framework governing multiemployer plans. Current multiemployer plan rules do not serve the best interests of workers and retirees. You can tell that by the bad condition, financially, some of these plans are in today, threatening the retirement of our workers who have paid into them over a lifetime. These rules have not been sufficient to keep plans in good financial health, and they tend to underestimate liabilities and result in insufficient contributions to the plans.

To ensure that benefit promises offered in a multiemployer plan are ultimately met, our proposal strengthens the rules for measuring the value of promised pension benefits and the amount of employer contributions necessary to pay them when the worker retires. These changes will require plan trustees and actuaries to measure and project plan assets and liabilities in a more prudent and accurate way than has been required under present law.

These changes also are designed to help move plans toward full funding

and at the same time protect the interests of plan participants and the taxpayers who would otherwise be required to bail out these multiemployer plans.

Our reform proposal also improves the so-called zone rules. Plans will be required to look further into the future when estimating their financial status, and will have to institute a form of stress testing to check whether a plan can remain financially sustainable through potential economic and demographic stresses. Depending on its health, plans will have to bolster the steps they take when signs of financial hardship arise. That is a pretty commonsense approach.

We will also replace current withdrawal-liability rules with a simpler, more transparent, and consistent method for determining an employer's liability if it withdraws from a multiemployer pension plan.

We have to look to the future. In doing so, the proposal includes a new option for sponsors of multiemployer plans to establish a new hybrid pension plan that we are going to call a composite plan. We have heard a great deal of interest from smaller businesses and their workers about the benefits of a composite plan approach, including less costly operations and more certainty in the financing of these plans.

In closing, let me say that there are no perfect solutions to the multiemployer pension crisis. But it is very true that the longer we wait, the harder and more expensive this problem gets. But it is clear, our solution is far better than allowing the system to continue on its current path—to collapse—and far better than merely throwing Federal money into plans without changing how they operate. The problem is never going to be solved by waiting or by using taxpayers' money.

The House has essentially advanced a pure, no-strings-attached bailout plan that throws taxpayer money to the plans in the hope that they can somehow earn returns sufficient to keep them going. We rely a great deal on the Congressional Budget Office around here for estimates of the future, and the nonpartisan CBO has told us that the House's proposal will not generate sustainability of pension plans or the sustainability of the PBGC. So we had better not spend our time on something the Congressional Budget Office says just isn't going to bring a solution and definitely not a long-term solution to these issues.

In contrast, the proposal that Senator ALEXANDER and I are releasing today addresses the immediate needs of the few multiemployer plans facing immediate crisis in a manner that protects participant benefits and also ensures a sustainable multiemployer pension system for the long haul, and it does this all in a fiscally responsible way.

Our proposal is not a giveaway to corporations or to unions, and it is a

better deal for the taxpayers than a future that would be an even larger problem and PBGC funding needs that will almost surely be met with a taxpayer bailout.

All participants in the system would make a sacrifice. Let me make that clear. All participants in the system are going to sacrifice—employers, unions, workers, and retirees. I am sure each one of those groups isn't going to consider this fair and responsible, but with a problem like this, if everybody doesn't give a little bit, it is never going to be fair and responsible anyway. But with some shared pain will come significant shared gain that will be to the benefit of over 1.5 million participants in about 125 multiemployer plans that are in serious financial jeopardy.

Without changes to the current system, we can't say for sure that people are going to get the benefits that they sacrificed for over a lifetime of work. But our plan, we are confident, will benefit all multiemployer plans and their participants by providing a stronger system for the long haul and by promoting long-term solvency of the PBGC.

Senator ALEXANDER and I offer this proposal as a path forward for a multiemployer pension system that we all know is in crisis.

Now, as we turn to getting this job done, I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate and in the House of Representatives to advance this proposal. We all know that just because you lay something on the table, that it is not necessarily going to be passed that way. So maybe there is some compromise needed. But whether it is this proposal or a little bit of compromise, we have to get this piece of legislation to the President's desk before more pension holders face losses of the benefits they have earned and benefits that they were promised.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 2486

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I rise this afternoon to talk about what some observers have called one of the best historically black colleges and universities in our country—Delaware State University in Dover, DE, home of the Hornets.

For a number of years, I was a naval flight officer in the Vietnam war and then came back to the United States and moved to Delaware and got an MBA at the University of Delaware. Right away after that, I went to work at what became the Delaware Economic Office. We were headquartered

at the campus of Delaware State College.

Delaware State College was an HBCU and was not a well-funded college, not one that was in the favor, frankly, of the Governor and legislature, for the most part, and was a bit of a stepchild.

I used to think: Boy, wouldn't it be great to be able to help transform Delaware State College into something historic, memorable, and outstanding.

Later on, I would be elected Governor—about 15 years later—and have the chance to work with the fellow who was the president of Delaware State University at the time and to transform, with the help of the Delaware General Assembly, Delaware State College into Delaware State University.

Today, of all the HBCUs in the country, I think its latest rating is No. 5, and I think there are 70 or 75 of them in all. They just reported that their enrollment for the coming year will reach 5,000 students, all in undergraduate, graduate, master's and Ph.D. programs, which is a record. We are proud of the Hornets and the great job they are doing educating people.

Last month, in one of my frequent visits to Delaware State, I took a campus tour unlike any other, from the cockpit of a brand-new Vulcanair V1.0 single-engine aircraft. We flew all over Kent County, north of Dover. We had a chance to do some approaches. It was a lot of fun, and it was basically a reminder that Delaware State provides undergraduate and graduate programs for all kinds of training and educational needs. One of the key ones right now and one of the most interesting, at least for a naval flight officer, is that Delaware State is the largest producer of pilots and aviation professionals of color in the country. I believe they have over 100 students and every one of them, when they graduate, has a job waiting for them. Some are pilots and others do a variety of work for aviation.

Today, we have about 157 million people who go to work in this country, and we have about 5 million jobs where nobody will show up. One of those areas where we need people is in the aviation world, and Delaware State is providing that. When the plane landed earlier this year at the airport just north of Dover, I held a roundtable with the Delaware State University executive vice president and provost, Dr. Tony Allen. We talked with administrators and students about a bipartisan bill called the FUTURE Act, which was discussed on the floor today and in previous days.

The FUTURE Act, as you will recall, was introduced by Senator JONES along with Senator SCOTT from South Carolina, and would provide a little over \$255 million annually to minority-serving institutions of higher education including about \$85 million to HBCUs for an additional 2 years through fiscal year 2021.

Almost \$900,000 of that money will go directly to Delaware State University.

You might ask: What would Delaware State do with that money? They use this Federal funding to help support STEM and teacher education programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels and to ensure that students at Delaware State have access to the best research tools. Specifically, this funding is used to help modernize classrooms at DSU, to improve math instruction, and to help recruit young men of color to teach in K-through-12 classrooms so that all students have mentors they can look up to.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, only 2 percent of teachers in the American public school system are African-American men, but 20 percent or more of the students are African-American males.

Think about that. A lot of these African-American males, frankly, haven't had some of the best mentors and role models in their lives growing up, and we have so few teachers of color that are minority male. The FUTURE Act funding, I think, is a good step for Congress to take to bridge that gap. I think it is a good example of how the Federal Government supports this critical mission at Delaware State and at HBCUs across the country.

Back in early September, the House of Representatives did its job and voted to reauthorize this funding through the bipartisan FUTURE Act. Unfortunately, the Senate has not followed the lead of the House in this critical funding for HBCUs which lapsed on September 30.

Before I yield to Senator COONS, I just wanted to say that my recollection is—and I might have this wrong, but I am looking for my staff, who would be sitting right here in front of me telling me if I had the right numbers—that 2 percent of teachers who are in public schools in America and I think in Delaware are men of color. They are African American. Almost 20 percent, maybe 25 percent, of the students in the public school system are people of color and about half of those are male. We need to do a better job.

As Governor, I started a mentoring program. We recruited, when I was Governor, 10,000 mentors—a lot of them to work with children of color. A lot of them have grown up in homes where they didn't have a positive male role model in their life. That is why the mentoring program is so important. That is why we especially need minority male teachers who are African American. That is not all we need, but it is a big part of what we need. Over half of the minority male teachers that we have in Delaware in our schools were educated at Delaware State University—over half—and we need more of them.

Senator COONS has joined me on the floor. I am enormously proud of Delaware State University and the leadership they have today and in the past, and proud to have been an honorary Hornet, and proud to yield to my colleague, Senator COONS, who has been

right there fighting for Delaware State University.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I would like to thank my colleague from our home State of Delaware. I come to the floor to join a number of my colleagues who are speaking on a pressing issue, the critical lapse in funding for hundreds of colleges and universities across our Nation.

On September 30, \$255 million in annual Federal funding for historically black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions expired.

Since this fund was first created, it has supported 400 HBCUs and MSIs, historically Black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions, across our country, including 97 HBCUs last year. This lapse has created real uncertainty and harm to these organizations and these universities, their students, their employees, and the public.

I just wanted to join my colleagues in highlighting the importance of this funding. I want to speak specifically to the HBCU of which Delaware is so proud—Delaware State University.

Delaware State is an engine for educational equity and access, for innovation and for leadership in our State, our region, and our Nation.

Delaware State University is one of the country's top public HBCUs. Its graduates go on to successful careers in all sorts of industries. Graduates from Delaware State have become some of our State's best nurses, teachers, business leaders, social workers, and Senate staff.

DSU's research programs are important drivers for innovation in a State with a proud history of invention and innovation. It is home to the Delaware Center for Neuroscience Research, a partnership of institutions across our State working to advance our understanding of how our brains form thoughts and memories and feelings, and how they change over time as we age.

It is also home to OSCAR, the Optical Science Center for Applied Research, where research that is in part federally funded is helping to speed early detection of disease, supporting our soldiers in better deterring and detecting threats, and equipping NASA missions, including the Mars Rover, with improved sensors.

To put it simply, we are very proud of Delaware State, and there is a lot of which to be proud. DSU grads are so impressive that I have asked several of them to join my staff here in Washington. Their commitment to equity and excellence is why we can't allow HBCUs around the country, such as Delaware State, to lose out on vitally needed Federal funding.

Last year, this program provided nearly \$1 million—\$887,000—to Delaware State, which is about 20 percent of their title III funding. These funds have a direct impact on students and funds critical science, math, and educator preparation programs.

There is no good reason for the Senate to ignore our HBCUs and MSIs and deny them the funding they deserve. In September, the House passed a bipartisan, budget-neutral, 2-year extension of this critical funding, which is known as the FUTURE Act. While I share Senator ALEXANDER's commitment to permanently extending this funding, we must not ask institutions to put their budgeting and planning on hold while we here in the Senate negotiate over many other pressing issues in higher education.

I urge my colleagues to pass the FUTURE Act immediately, and with that, I would like to make a motion.

Madam President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 212, H.R. 2486. I ask unanimous consent that the Murray amendment at the desk be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that 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. ALEXANDER. Madam President, reserving the right to object—and I will object—I am disappointed that my colleagues are offering such a short-term, piecemeal approach toward resolving the problems of our historically Black colleges and minority-serving institutions, when I have repeatedly offered a much better idea, and they have blocked it. I will offer it again in just a moment. I know the Senator from North Carolina is here to speak on the same subject.

Compared to what I have offered, they are offering a short-term, 2-year, budget gimmick-supported idea that will have a difficult time passing the Senate. What I have offered and they have blocked is permanent funding of historically Black colleges and minority-serving institutions—permanent funding—at the level of \$255 million a year, properly funded. That is No. 1. There is assurance from the U.S. Department of Education that every single historically Black institution—there are 97 of them—have enough funding to go until next October. Even the Senate ought to be able to do its job in that period of time.

At the same time, I have offered the Alexander-Jones bill offered by the distinguished Senator from Alabama, which would simplify the Federal aid application form called the FAFSA for 8 million minority students, among 20 million families in this country.

Why would anybody want to take a short-term, piecemeal approach that is based on a budget gimmick that couldn't pass the Senate compared with permanent funding for historically Black colleges and a bipartisan proposal to change the hated, dreaded FAFSA by reducing the number of questions you have to answer from 108 questions to between 18 and 30? This

document is the single biggest impediment to minority students going to college in America today, and the Democrats are blocking the passage of a bipartisan bill.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I want to thank the chairman of the committee for objecting. I want to tell my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that I appreciate their being here giving the passionate speeches they have because they made the case for Senator ALEXANDER's bipartisan bill.

You see, incorporated in this legislation is an initiative by Senator JONES and Senator BALDWIN. Anybody who makes this out to be a partisan piece of legislation is just flat wrong. I have more historical Black colleges in North Carolina than any State can claim. When those chancellors and presidents have been presented with the question: Do you want 2 years or permanent, they all said permanent. They didn't know there was a permanent option.

I say this to my three colleagues because none of them are on the committee: There is a permanent option for funding historically Black colleges. It is in the chairman's bill. We have been told that the FUTURE Act needs to be passed. The FUTURE Act is 2 years long. There is not much of a future there. We ought to match its title with the chairman's bill because this really does address the future.

The No. 1 concern of historically Black institutions is predictability of funding. The chairman's bill is permanent. We are not going to come in here in 2 years and seek another reauthorization, but the benefit is that we are passing good legislation.

Let me point out to my colleagues that it is important to read legislation. The FUTURE Act is funded by whacking the funding for the State guaranty agencies. By taking away the account maintenance fees that these State-based organizations receive to administer loans, we are robbing Peter to pay Paul. These same students who are probably going to go to historically Black universities are also seeking State-based loans to do it, and we are providing the institutions 2 years of predictability on one side, and we are taking away the fees that are needed to administer the loans to allow them to be able to afford it. This is when it is important to look at the details.

The way the FUTURE Act is funded, it actually hurts all institutions in North Carolina. Just today, I heard from the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority about how important this funding is for their daily functions in administering student loans. So I believe there is a better way to extend HBC funding but also not to hurt students.

At the end of the day, our focus—the human face we see is the student who benefits from the educational oppor-

tunity they have been given. I would tell you that the FUTURE Act flunks on all counts. It is not permanent. It takes away from some because of how it is funded. We have an opportunity with Chairman ALEXANDER's bill, the Student Aid Improvement Act, which would extend this title III funding permanently, but it would also include other bipartisan support changes in higher education, like expanding Pell grants. Every Member of the Senate has sat on this floor and said we have to do something on Pell grants. Here is your opportunity.

It doesn't fit in the timeframe of passing a bill that passed the House that provides 2 years of funding, but we have a bipartisan piece of legislation. It simplifies the financial student financial aid process. You saw the chairman hold up the form. There is nobody who can defend the continuation of that form. It should be one page. The chairman of the Education Committee has tried for now 5 years to transition that to one page. You might look at us and say: Well, we can do this very quickly, but we need time to talk about this. We have taken 5 years to do this, and the people on the committee know this.

This is the sixth time you have come to the floor and asked unanimous consent to do the exact same thing: Pass this; don't look at anything else.

No, that is wrong, but it is not wrong because we are in the majority. It is wrong because it is not serving the students for whom we are supposed to be here setting policy. It simplifies aid award letters to students. It is actually easy to tell them they got their student aid. It is cumbersome. If you are on the committee, you understand the agony they go through. We are wiping all of that away.

I believe Chairman ALEXANDER has a better path. I also would like to remind my colleagues that while this funding should be extended, there has been no lapse. Let me state that again. It should be extended, and there has been no lapse.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have a letter I received from Secretary DeVos, stating that the title III funding in question is available through September 2021, be printed in the RECORD.

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

THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION,
Washington, DC, October 9, 2019.

DEAR [REDACTED] I write to clarify the status of grants under Title III, Part F of the Higher Education Act of 1965, in light of the enactment of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Health Extenders Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 116-59), signed on September 27, 2019.

Initially, I want to note that the new law has no effect on funds that we recently awarded in the Title III, Part F programs. Funds obligated in fiscal year (FY) 2019 have already been made available to grantees under all Part F programs in the Department of Education's (Department) G5 System for the project period beginning on Octo-

ber 1, 2019, and ending on September 30, 2020. Those funds will remain available to grantees for allowable uses during this period. In addition, in the Part F programs that award grants competitively, the Department has carried over FY 2019 funds into FY 2020 to support noncompeting continuation awards and supplements for project periods from October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021.

The Department's ability to make additional formula grants in FY 2020 under Part F for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, and to conduct new competitions for FY 2021, depends on the availability of congressionally appropriated funds. However, this will have no bearing on the grant funds that have already been made available to grantees for the next 12 months.

This Administration is committed to each and every HBCU and other minority-serving institutions and the important work they do in educating historically underrepresented student populations. If you have any questions about these programs, please reach out to your program officer in the Department's Office of Postsecondary Education.

Sincerely,

BETSY DEVOS.

Mr. BURR. On that basis alone, there is not the sense of urgency that some have come to the floor six times and suggested. I don't disagree with any of my colleagues that this is something we need to do now, but a 2-year temporary bill that doesn't accomplish any of the other reforms when we have had 5 years of bipartisan work—why would we not take this option? Why would we not sit down and find a way for Chairman ALEXANDER's bill—which has many Democratic initiatives in it—to pass and provide historically Black colleges and universities with permanent funding, provide students with a one-page form to fill out for student aid, provide an expedited way for the notification when their loans have been approved? We are there, but for some reason, some want us to do a 2-year temporary fix. It is wrong. I thank the chairman for objecting.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I see the Senator from Ohio. I intend to offer my alternative to which, I gather, someone plans to object. I will go ahead and do that unless he wants to speak at this point.

Mr. BROWN. Go ahead, Senator ALEXANDER.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2557

Mr. ALEXANDER. What I will do is make my offer quickly, and then I will make my speech following the objection.

Let me summarize, to begin with, that what has just happened is I have objected to a short-term, piecemeal extension of funding for historically Black colleges and minority-serving institutions because it is a bill that, I think, will have great difficulty passing the Senate because of the way it is not properly funded. What I am about to offer, and which I will speak on after the objection is made, is permanent funding for historically Black colleges at the level of \$255 million a year—permanent funding—as opposed to short-term, piecemeal funding as part of a

package of higher education legislation that has been prepared and cosponsored by 29 Senators—more Democrats than Republicans—with the principal other provision being reducing the questions in the FAFSA, the Federal aid application form, from 108 to between 18 and 30. This is a bill introduced by the Senator from Alabama, Mr. JONES, and I, which our Senate committee has been working on for 5 years. It is the single most important impediment to keeping minority students from going to college in our State—and I think most States, according to our former Governor—and it would help 8 million minority students who fill out this complicated form every year.

I will speak more to that in just a minute, but that is what I am about to ask my friends on the other side to permit me to pass.

Madam President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. 2557—the bill I just described, the permanent funding of historically Black colleges and the simplification of the FAFSA and other measures—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 reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I reserve the right to object.

I and my colleagues here—Senator CARPER, Senator COONS, and prominent Democrats in the education debate—have deep concerns about Senator ALEXANDER's proposed micropackage. To be sure, it is a micropackage of higher education bills. It is not a complete reauthorization.

Our caucus has been clear about what a comprehensive bill should look like. It addresses access, affordability, accountability, and campus safety. This Alexander proposal falls well short.

The Senator from Tennessee says this package is bipartisan. That is sort of true but not entirely. He has made a number of changes to the underlying bipartisan bills that do not have the support of lead Democrats on this and, in some cases, the lead Republicans of the original bills. For example, this package includes a limited repeal of the ban on Pell grants for incarcerated adults instead of the full repeal of the ban included in the bipartisan bill. Our bill adds to Pell grants.

His version of the short-term Pell Grant Program makes significant changes to the bipartisan JOBS Act of 2019, a bill of which I am an original cosponsor. The JOBS Act excludes for-profit colleges from eligibility for the program. We know the Trump administration is all about for-profit institutions, with the Secretary of Education leading the charge. This version allows

for-profit colleges—the sorts of schools we know mislead and scam students in too many cases—to sneak their way into eligibility.

One of the things I admire about the chairman of the HELP Committee—and have admired since I met him 20-some years ago—was his work not just as Secretary of Education but his work as president of the University of Tennessee. He knows what for-profit colleges do for and to far too many students. His legislation removes a number of the protections meant to ensure programs eligible for this funding are actually high-quality ones that educate students. These are just a couple of the ways this micropackage is different from the original bipartisan bills. We know the micropackage cannot pass the House. Chairman SCOTT and Speaker PELOSI have been clear that they want comprehensive reform. A comprehensive HEA reauthorization can pass. That is not what this is.

I hope we can come to a bipartisan agreement, but as we work together, we can't hold hostage historically Black colleges and universities. Most of them are in the South. Most of them are in the States of my colleagues who are from the South. Most of them are in Republican States with Republican Senators. As mentioned by Senator CARPER and Senator COONS, of Delaware, my State, which is similar to Delaware, has historically Black colleges. In Ohio, Wilberforce and Central State are prominent institutions that matter so much to our State. For the nearly 2 years now since the Trump administration has been in office, these schools have been in fiscal limbo.

I know Senator ALEXANDER cares about these schools, but there is no evidence that the President of the United States does. They need their funding extended now. The mandatory funding, which is vital to these schools, ran out on September 30 because the Senate refused to act and because the President didn't seem to care. The House did its job in passing the FUTURE Act. Now HBCUs are facing impossible decisions in the face of dwindling funding. The Senate needs to immediately take up and vote on the bill the House already passed to provide full, mandatory funding for MSIs and HBCUs.

We all agree—Senator BURR, Senator ALEXANDER, the two Senators from Delaware, and Senator CARDIN, who has just joined us—that HBCUs have fostered generations of Black leaders. They are a critical part of our Nation's higher ed system. These schools have rich legacies and proven track records of educating students of color and other underrepresented students.

Wilberforce was founded in 1856 in Wilberforce, OH, as the Nation's first private institution of higher ed for Black students. Central State, which is in the same town across the road in Wilberforce, has a rich legacy of educating students as an 1890 land grant institution. We have helped it this year

through the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. It is further tasked with strengthening research, extension, and teaching in food and ag science.

We know that without our HBCUs, millions of Black students would have been denied the opportunity to pursue higher ed. HBCUs account for approximately a quarter of all of Black students who earn bachelor's degrees and nearly a third of all of the African-American students who earn STEM bachelor's degrees. Our country owes an enormous debt to these schools that we don't seem to be paying back. That is why it is unconscionable that the Senate has abandoned these schools and these students.

I have heard from schools about how their budgets have been thrown into chaos. They tell me that academia is about planning, and many of them already operate close to the margins. HBCUs have already received letters from the Department of Education telling them that they are not getting future funding and that they can't use any Federal funding for long-term projects. It could mean program cuts and layoffs. It means no long-term construction projects. It means not hiring permanent faculty and not purchasing major equipment. Imagine operating a school like that.

It is shameful that in 2019 we still ignore schools that serve students of color by treating this as anything other than a must-pass bill. I know that very few African Americans voted for President Trump, and I know he seems to care for only those people who voted for him. Yet this is an obligation. Senator ALEXANDER wants to fulfill it, but he is operating in a straitjacket with this President.

It is so important that we do this. The FUTURE Act is budget neutral, and it is fully paid for. We use the same offset the administration has used. It is a bipartisan pay-for, not a gimmick.

I should add that less than 2 years ago, this Senate and President Trump had no problem passing a \$1 trillion tax cut for corporations and the wealthy that wasn't paid for. We have seen that under Republican leadership in the White House. We have seen what has happened to our budget debt, and we know corporations have had huge tax cuts. We know 70 percent of the tax cuts went to the wealthiest 1 percent. Yet this body can't take care of historically Black colleges. They hold schools that serve students of color to a different standard.

I am hopeful that Senator ALEXANDER, whom I trust, and Senator MURRAY, whom I trust, will continue to negotiate a truly bipartisan and truly comprehensive higher ed reauthorization that supports HBCUs. I support those efforts. That is the way forward for the priorities that Senator ALEXANDER has outlined in his micropackage and for the updates and reauthorizations all of our students and families need. HBCUs and MSIs can't wait

until that process is over. They need action now. They have all had to overcome enough hurdles every day in order to educate their students. The U.S. Senate should not be one of those hurdles. We need to pass the FUTURE Act now.

Accordingly, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I see the Senator from Maryland, but I would like to take a few minutes to describe the proposal to which Senator BROWN just objected.

I appreciate the Senator from Ohio in his saying that he hopes that Senator MURRAY and I can do what we usually do, which is to take issues within our Education Committee and work them out and present them to the Senate as a whole, but that is not the way this came up. This came up suddenly, and no one talked to me about it. Here we are when, for 5 years, we have been in the midst of reauthorizing higher education. Permanently funding historically Black colleges has always been an important part of that discussion when suddenly here comes this bill as if there were an emergency.

What I heard my friend from Ohio say is that he objects to my proposal as a microproposal, as a small proposal, but he is suggesting an even smaller proposal. He is suggesting a 2-year fix that, in my opinion, can't pass the Senate because of the way it is funded.

Plus, why would you want a 2-year fix when you have the chairman of the Education Committee working for the permanent funding of historically Black colleges and minority-serving institutions? This is what I have offered on the floor, and that is what has just now been objected to by the Democrats.

At the same time, he mentioned a number of bills that he thought needed some changes. The request I made that was objected to also included simplifying FAFSA, which is the Federal aid application form that 20 million students fill out every year. Let's put a human face on that.

The President of Southwest Tennessee Community College in Memphis, which is a largely minority institution in terms of its students—I see my colleague from Tennessee is presiding today, and she knows this institution well—told me they lose 1,500 students every semester because of the complexity of this form. There are 108 questions. A bipartisan working group, including Senator BENNET, of Colorado, a Democrat; Senator JONES, of Alabama, a Democrat; Senator KING, of Maine, an Independent; and many others on our side, we have reduced these 108 questions to between 18 and 30. It has the support of the student aid administrators from across the country. It has the support of college presidents who see their students turned away because their parents and their grandparents see this as too complex.

Former Governor of Tennessee Bill Haslam led our legislature to create 2 free years of college tuition in Tennessee, but first you have to fill this out. Governor Haslam has told me the single biggest impediment to low-income Tennesseans getting those 2 years of free education is the complexity of that form.

Why would the Senator object to doing it when we have been working on it for 5 years and have a bipartisan bill to get it done? Why don't we pass it? Why don't we make it the law? What do we say to those 1,500 students who don't get to go to college because of this?

At the same time, at the other end of our State, the president of East Tennessee State University tells me that 70 percent of his student body is subjected to verification. The way this system works is you have to give some information to the IRS and some information to the Department of Education, and if you make one little mistake, they jerk your Pell grant while they figure out what the problem is. Seventy percent of the students were subjected to that verification, and some of them lost their scholarships while that happened. That is totally unnecessary.

People in Tennessee ask me: If that is true, why don't you pass it?

That is the question I am asking my friends because I just asked the Senate to pass it, and the Senator objected. Why don't we pass it? Why don't we make it the law? It is not as if I just showed up one day with this. We have been all the way through our process of hearings. It has been through working groups of Democratic and Republican Senators. It ought to be done.

There is no need for us to come to the floor and say we need to pass a short-term, 2-year fix for historically Black colleges when, at the same time, you could have permanent funding for historically Black colleges and could fix the Federal aid application form that 8 million minority students fill out every year—8 million students. What are the Senators going to say to them about why they are not going to make it easier for them to go to college when we are here, arguing about a short-term, piecemeal fix for historically Black colleges?

In a way, I am glad we are having this discussion because I have been trying to bring this to the attention of my colleagues and if you go home and talk to the families, they will tell you that 20 million fill this out every year. In Tennessee, it is 400,000. And college aid administrators will tell you that.

I will give another example. I was in West Tennessee a couple of weeks ago at an event that was sponsored by the Ayers family. For 20 years, they have given money to help rural kids succeed in college. What the Ayers have discovered is that instead of spending their money on scholarships, they are spend-

ing it on counselors because counselors help students more than the money does. They have found there are lots of scholarships, but it is the counselors who make the difference. Yet what do the counselors spend their time doing? They help students answer these unnecessary questions.

So we are blocking and impeding the very students the Senator is claiming he wants to help when he objects to this bill I offered today.

I want to make it clear that I will come to the floor every day, if I need to, and offer legislation for the permanent funding of historically Black colleges and minority-serving institutions, which will be fully paid for, and a bipartisan proposal to simplify the FAFSA from 108 questions to 18 to 30 questions, which is estimated by the Congressional Budget Office to allow for 250,000 new American students to receive Pell grants as a result of the simplicity of what we have done.

I am disappointed that we haven't come to a bipartisan result on that. My friends who are here today know very well that this is the way I like to work. I believe it is hard to get to the U.S. Senate, that it is hard to stay here, and that while you are here, you might as well try to accomplish something. That is what I want to do. I hope we can do it on higher education.

When we accomplish it, I hope we can say we have agreed on the permanent funding for historically Black colleges and that we have elevated the importance of this complicated FAFSA to the attention of Senators on both sides of the aisle so that we say: Let's get this done. I don't want to go home any longer and have people ask me: Why don't you pass that? Why do I have to give the same information to two different parts of the Federal Government? Why are you discouraging the very low-income students who ought to be going to college?

I am disappointed in this result today, and I intend to continue to work for the permanent funding of historically Black colleges.

My last sentence will be this: I want all of the presidents of the 97 institutions to know that the U.S. Department of Education has said there is full Federal funding for historically Black colleges and minority-serving institutions for another year. Another year ought to be plenty of time for us to reject this short-term fix and to adopt a permanent solution as well as to simplify the FAFSA, have short-term Pell grants, and take up a variety of other proposals that ought to be a part of the Higher Education Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

REMEMBERING SERGEI MAGNITSKY

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, November 16 was the 10th anniversary of the tragic death of Sergei Magnitsky.

Sergei Magnitsky was a Moscow-based lawyer who represented an investment company, known as Hermitage Capital, whose American-born founder was Bill Browder. In the course of Mr. Magnitsky's representation of his client, he discovered a major tax fraud issue—\$230 million of taxpayer moneys being funneled through shell companies with business ties to President Putin. Mr. Magnitsky did what any good lawyer would do in discovering corruption and reported it to the local authorities. As a result, he was arrested and tortured. Ultimately, he died in prison. He was in prison for nearly a year without having a trial.

Unfortunately, this is not a unique circumstance in Russia, but we in the global community decided that we could not let this injustice go without taking action. Those responsible needed to be held accountable. Yet, in Russia, those responsible for this tragedy were promoted and received awards.

So there needs to be accountability for those who violate basic human rights and their government will not take action.

I first learned of the Magnitsky tragedy in my role as a member of the Helsinki Commission. I was the chair and ranking Democrat on the Helsinki Commission. The Helsinki Commission is the way we enforced the Helsinki Final Act that was passed in 1975, and it adheres to basic principles of human rights. It gives every member-signatory of the Helsinki Final Accords the right to challenge what is happening in other states. Russia is a signatory to the Helsinki Final Act. The United States is a signatory, and we raised the Magnitsky issue.

Then, working with the late Senator John McCain, I authored legislation known as the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act. It was enacted into law in 2012, and what it does is it says that those who were participating in gross human rights violations in Russia—related to what happened to Sergei Magnitsky—that those who were responsible would not be allowed to visit the United States by being granted visas or to use our banking system. Why was that so important? Because these corrupt officials like to have their assets in dollars, not rubles, and they like to visit the United States, and they like their families to visit the United States.

What is unique about the Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act is that Congress can initiate the executive branch taking up particular names.

It is interesting—I have heard from many Russians who fully support what we are doing. We are giving them an opportunity for their voices to be heard.

Mr. Putin lobbied against its passage, but it passed Congress by an overwhelming vote. To date, 54 individuals have been sanctioned under the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012, and it has been very effective. We have been told through press

accounts that in the summit meeting between Mr. Putin and President Trump, it was one of the first subjects that Mr. Putin raised in regard to the Magnitsky sanctions. And I must tell you, it provided U.S. leadership a way to stand up and hold human rights abusers and corrupt individuals accountable for their crimes. As a result of our action, other countries acted—Canada acted; European countries acted—and we were able to get much more effective use of this sanction against human rights violators.

The Magnitsky legacy is not limited to Russia. Unfortunately, there are powerful, corrupt, and dangerous human rights violators globally, where countries do not hold these violators accountable for their actions. So once again partnering with the late Senator John McCain, I authored the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, which was enacted in 2016, and we have used that act. We used it in Saudi Arabia to deal with the tragic death of Jamal Khashoggi. Over 100 individuals have been sanctioned under Global Magnitsky, including those in the DRC, Nicaragua, and Burma as result a result of the Rohingya tragedies. Once again, U.S. leadership was there. As a result of our action, we saw action in Canada, and we saw action in the European Union.

As we commemorate the 10th anniversary of Sergei Magnitsky's tragic death, let us recognize that Sergei's life and legacy have led to two of the most significant human rights accountability laws that exist today. Because of Sergei Magnitsky, the United States and many of our allies now have the tools available to hold human rights abusers accountable and to deter would-be perpetrators from committing such crimes in the first place.

I urge my colleagues to continue to honor Sergei Magnitsky through our actions. Let us stand by our values and continue to ensure the protection and defense of human rights around the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I know people are waiting to see what might happen around here. We will have before us a continuing resolution to fully fund the Federal Government through December 20. I wish this was not necessary, and that we would have just passed all of our appropriations bills. But while I wish the step was not necessary, I would urge all Members to vote aye.

I wish we were further along in our work, but it is not for lack of trying. It is no secret what is holding up negotiations—the President's demand for \$8.6 billion more for his vanity wall along the southern border. This is a wall the President gave his word to the American people that Mexico would pay for it, and now he is telling the American people: No, I want the American taxpayers to pay for it.

I should point out that he already has \$10 billion on hand. He could not possibly build that much of his wall, anyway, over the next fiscal year with the eminent domain that would have to be done in Texas and elsewhere. And, of course, the wall they have built, at a cost of millions of taxpayer dollars a mile, can be defeated by a \$100 saw at the local hardware store. The President was talking about how they will make it so high that it will be hard to get over it, but you can just kneel down and cut a hole to go through it. But he has \$10 billion on hand for his wall. It could not be spent in the next year no matter how much the government is overcharged for the wall.

He stole \$6.3 billion of that from our troops and their families, and despite the fact that the vast majority of that money has yet to be spent, he wants more.

If we hadn't had this issue, we would have had our work done by now. To quote one of the most famous baseball players, "It's *deja vu* all over again." The President is once again putting his own personal interests ahead of the interests of our country.

I would like to remind the Chamber what is at stake in the annual appropriations bills. These are the things that are being held up because the President wants us to forget his promise that Mexico would pay for this wall.

What is being held up? Well, education for our children. Cutting-edge medical research. Anybody who has a family member with cancer or diabetes or any other disease wants their tax dollars being spent on medical research. Support for our Nation's farmers, medical care for our veterans, addressing the opioid crisis, environmental programs to keep our air safe to breathe and our water safe to drink—all of these things are being held up, all are being put on autopilot because the President cares about his wall—his symbolic wall—far more than he does about medical research or medical care for our veterans.

So we find ourselves at a critical juncture. We could pass another continuing resolution to allow us to continue to negotiate in good faith, which I am committed to do, or shut down the government. Well, that is really not a choice.

The continuing resolution before us is a good bill that will allow us to continue our bipartisan, bicameral negotiating on the fiscal year 2020 appropriations process. I hope all Senators will support it.

I would note for Senators how the Republican chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator SHELBY, and I, as vice chairman, have kept the process in a bipartisan fashion. Almost all of our appropriations bills have come out of committee unanimously or virtually unanimously. They have come to the floor, and then they have gotten an overwhelming vote. Let's rely on those Senators in both parties who are willing to set aside political posturing and who are willing to set aside symbolism and instead have substance.

In addition to continuing to fund our government for 4 more weeks, our bill tackles some issues that have to be addressed right away. It provides the Commerce Department with the necessary funds to carry out the decennial census, which is required by our Constitution. It provides funds for mobile centers to ensure that the census reaches those in the hardest to reach areas. It fulfills our constitutional obligation to make sure every American is counted.

The bill includes a provision that would block a looming \$7.6 billion rescission of highway funding set to hit the States July 1—the States of virtually everybody in this Chamber, Republican and Democratic alike. Without this provision, each of our States would see significant cuts to its highway funding. That is the last thing we need given the dire state of infrastructure in America today.

The bill includes a pay raise for the military, which is set to go into effect in January. It also includes legislation to ensure that victims of state-sponsored terrorism get the compensation they are entitled to. More importantly, it ensures that the government remains funded and open while we continue to work on full-year appropriations bills.

Now, even if we passed this bill today or tomorrow, we have only 4 short weeks to complete our work. It can be done. I am committed to staying here, as we have in the past. We all worked nights, weekends, and I must say the tremendous Appropriations Committee staff worked even more hours.

But it cannot be a one-sided negotiation. And we cannot be expected to divert billions more in taxpayer dollars to fulfill President Trump's cynical campaign promise as part of the final deal. It does not have the support in this Chamber or among the American people to carry the day.

If we had an up-or-down vote in this body—will you take this money away from housing for our troops, for medical research, and all these other things, to pay for an ineffective wall so the President will not be embarrassed by not keeping his word that Mexico was going to pay for it? Of course, that would fail. Of course, that would fail. Nobody wants to go back home and say they did that.

We have billions of dollars in here to keep our borders secure. We want to keep our borders secure. Everybody

wants to, Republican and Democrats alike, but let's not waste the money on symbolism, especially if it means we do not do our medical research or take care of housing for our troops among all the other things I have listed. Do not do a bill with the hopes of, someday, Mexico will pay us back, just because the President promised they would. We all know they are not going to.

So, with that being said, we have made some progress. I do not go and call press conferences like some of my colleague do each moment along the way, but I have been working closely with a bipartisan group. We all look forward to continue to work with Chairman SHELBY and Chairwoman LOWEY and with Ranking Member GRANGER to get these bills across the finish line.

We owe it to the American people, and we have demonstrated—I think Senator SHELBY as chair, myself as vice chair, we have demonstrated that we can get the bills through with an overwhelming bipartisan vote. Just let us do it. Let's go forward and pass them. Let's do substance over symbolism.

With that, Mr. President, I see my distinguished colleague on the floor, so I will yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Tennessee.

INTERNET EXCHANGE ACT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, it is so interesting to be here on the floor and to hear such a variety of ideas and to know that, across the country, people are logging on and they are tuning in and they are watching how we go about our business. And one of the things that is so interesting as we pull the Internet and online activity into our lives and stay connected, we sometimes enjoy the idea of just “unplugging” for a weekend, going to somewhere in the country that holds a really special appeal. Certainly at this time of year, people will talk about going away for Thanksgiving, or maybe they went away during the fall to look at pretty leaves.

They see it as an escape and maybe even an opportunity to get just a little bit of smugness in their tone when they talk about how they have chosen a destination that has politely informed them to not expect WiFi and not to expect that Internet connection.

But here is a question for you: How many would make that trip, but still knowing there is not that connection, they take the smartphone, the iPad, or the laptop anyway? Of course, we know we all do that.

After all, we have been trained to respond to the buzzing, beeping, and the ringing of our device, and so eventually, what happens is we give up and we start wandering around, searching for a signal, and then declaring to all of the very unimpressed locals: Well, I don't see how y'all do it without being able to have access to high-speed Internet. How can you survive without broadband?

Well, to my colleagues, let me say this: They do it because they do not have a choice. You know, these days, encountering so much as a spotty cell signal causes concern for those of us who are accustomed to high-speed Internet and broadband connectivity, but I will tell you there are millions of Americans out there for whom a broadband connection or even the pop and hiss of a dialup connection is completely out of reach.

In a world where even simple online interactions require lightning fast connections, economies in rural America are falling behind. We read every day about entire industries setting up shop in budding metropolises like Nashville, TN, but to many, corporate America's glowing new hubs sound like remote outposts compared to the familiar crush that is here on the eastern seaboard.

Our perspective is skewed. Even so, businesses move inward because they see potential for growth with minimal risk, but there is only so far that they can push it. Rural communities do not have much to offer in terms of operational support or a reliable customer base, and most of them lack a crucial resource: the funding and infrastructure to back reliable broadband services.

It is true, “the cloud” needs a physical connection to Planet Earth, and broadband networks rely on physical “Internet Exchange” points. Without these hubs, subscribers of different Internet providers cannot communicate with one another.

While many businesses are certainly capable of fronting the costs associated with building the actual exchange points and running connections to other hubs, there is no incentive for them to gamble on a stagnant economy, so they go elsewhere, and local businesses go nowhere, unable to expand into the global online marketplace.

And just to think, a decade ago, we wasted an opportunity to bridge the digital divide, to even close the digital divide. Back in 2009, during the stimulus days, President Obama signed an economic recovery package that included 7.2 billion, \$7.2 billion to expand broadband services in underserved areas.

Well, predictably, those dollars began to flow into urban and suburban areas, leaving rural communities stranded on the far side of a gulf that Washington had ended up widening. Mistakes were made, but it would be an even bigger mistake to make rural residents suffer through it.

This year, I introduced the bipartisan Internet Exchange Act in an effort to get the Senate talking about broadband accessibility. When passed, the bill will offset the start-up cost of establishing broadband connections via a series of grants reserved exclusively for unserved rural areas. That is unserved rural areas, those that have been left out, those that did not benefit

from the \$7.2 billion that President Obama put in the stimulus for broadband expansion.

They did not get any of that money. They got left further behind and pushed further out of the economic mainstream for the 21st century. As with any program, infrastructure alone is no guarantee of success, but the presence of new and expanded Internet exchange facilities will create a stronger and more competitive web. More hubs will enable faster data transmissions, allowing local businesses to expand and, in rural communities, e-commerce to flourish.

Farmers, manufacturers, miners, will gain access to state-of-the-art technologies that support safer and more productive operations. Medical practitioners will be able to care for neglected populations via telemedicine. Schools and libraries will have advanced tools at their fingertips and open the world to their students. The local law enforcement will add an important tool in their “public safety toolbox.” Businesses looking to lay down roots will notice that rural communities are investing in themselves and, hopefully, make the decision to bring jobs and business opportunities to local workers and to rural America.

But perhaps, most importantly, rural residents and their guests will be able to decide for themselves whether they want to connect or unplug, and they will be able to do it on their own terms.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 455

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to raise awareness about the open enrollment period for health insurance marketplace coverage.

Between now and December 15, Granite Staters and Americans across the country can enroll in healthcare plans for 2020 through the Affordable Care Act’s health insurance marketplaces. Tens of thousands of Granite Staters and millions of Americans will be eligible for Federal premium tax credits to help pay the cost of monthly premiums as well as financial assistance to reduce the cost of annual deductibles. I am sad to say the Trump administration refuses to be a reliable partner in helping to spread the word about open enrollment.

For the third year in a row, we have an administration that has focused on sabotaging the Affordable Care Act instead of raising awareness for open enrollment. This administration is even focusing resources on promoting enrollment and junk health plans that

don’t provide coverage for preexisting conditions and that don’t meet the Affordable Care Act’s comprehensive coverage requirements.

After failing to repeal the Affordable Care Act in the Senate, the Trump administration is making an end-run around Congress, trying to dismantle the ACA through regulations, administrative actions, and lawsuits in the Federal court.

As we can see in this chart, 2 years ago, the administration cut funding for advertising and outreach efforts to promote open enrollment by 90 percent. The administration went from \$100 million—we can see on that bar—down to \$10 million in 2017 and \$10 million in 2018 and \$10 million in 2019.

These advertising cuts are pennywise and pound foolish. They are part of the administration’s concerted attempt to keep Americans in the dark about what their insurance options are.

Federal advertising on television and through digital platforms and other media is critical to drawing a healthy and balanced mix of consumers into the marketplace. In fact, research shows that California’s State-level investments in marketing and advertising for open enrollment generated a 3-to-1 return on investment through lower premiums from a more balanced risk pool.

By refusing to adequately promote open enrollment, the administration is forcing our insurance markets to miss out on an opportunity to improve the markets, to lower premiums for consumers, and to ensure a healthy health insurance market—no pun intended—throughout this country.

That is why I introduced the MORE Health Education Act—to restore those health insurance marketplace advertising dollars and to increase outreach funding back to the \$100 million a year. My bill would also prohibit the administration from using any of these funds to promote short-term plans or junk plans—plans that don’t comply with the Affordable Care Act’s requirements for preexisting condition protections among many other provisions that provide real insurance coverage for people who need it.

The Congressional Budget Office projects that approximately 500,000 more people would enroll in the health insurance marketplace or Medicaid coverage each year as a result of my legislation. That is half a million people who would be insured and be able to better take care of themselves and their families, and they would have access to primary care, to preventive services, and to a wide variety of other services they need and that they would be afforded under the essential health benefits of the Affordable Care Act.

My bill would also result in a reduction in marketplace premiums thanks to the increased enrollment from a more balanced risk pool. It would be a win-win all around.

Mr. President, at this time, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous con-

sent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 455 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 reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Indiana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 913

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, ObamaCare has failed because it is the classic example of Big Government getting in cahoots with a healthcare industry that is broken. It was doomed to fail because when has Big Government and Big Business ever resulted in something that is going to cost less and be more effective?

Under ObamaCare, decisions are made by the healthcare industry executives and the Federal Government bureaucrats—not patients, not consumers. This program is authorizing millions of dollars we don’t have to prop up a system that is not working. If ObamaCare was working, it would sell itself, but it doesn’t work. Costs continue to rise, and Americans continue to be stuck with the bill.

I believe there are things that ObamaCare does that we should keep. I actually incorporated it into my own business’s plan back before the law required you to do it. I covered preexisting conditions and no cap on coverage. The pillars of ObamaCare—we should all accept that.

When they added keeping kids on there until they are 26, that is fine too. Those ships have sailed. But the Affordable Care Act is not remotely affordable, and it is only going to get worse.

I applaud the Trump administration for doing their due diligence on how healthcare policy changes are going to affect average Americans. They are taking the approach to not go deeper in the hole with something like ObamaCare but to reform the industry by making it competitive, transparent, eliminate the barriers to entry and, yes, encourage the healthcare consumer to get involved in his or her own well-being.

I do believe President Trump is right. The Republicans can be the party of healthcare without involving more government, but we need to do that by putting more power back into the hands of the American people, not ceding total power to government bureaucrats and big healthcare executives.

I have a better idea. The truth in pricing act—my bill I am countering with—encapsulates some of the ideas behind the proposed and final rules announced by the White House last week, which I fully support. The complex, opaque nature of healthcare pricing makes it difficult for consumers to anticipate, measure, and compare healthcare costs and coverage options.

Hospitals have a chargemaster that nobody can understand, which actually inflates retail prices billable to a patient or an insurance provider, but insurers usually negotiate steep discounts to these inflated prices that consumers and the employers who pay all the bills never see. It is done behind closed doors.

More pricing transparency would address this market failure. Increased competition gives more decision making to the people who are supposed to use it.

This is why I introduced the truth in pricing act, which requires health insurers to disclose negotiated rates, including any cost-sharing obligations for consumers for healthcare services covered under their health plans. It is difficult for insured consumers to shop for healthcare services in our current, opaque, and broken market within which ObamaCare works, especially if they don't know actual prices. Insurers have the unique ability to provide this information to consumers.

Why subsidize insurance companies to pay for navigators and insurance agents when we can instead make the market work better and be more consumer-driven and transparent? This is the way we break the stranglehold that government in big healthcare has on healthcare delivery.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senator modify her request and instead, as in legislative session, the Committee on HELP be discharged from further consideration of S. 913, the True Price Act, 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 reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator so modify her request?

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Reserving the right to object, let me say that I agree with my colleague that we need more transparency in healthcare pricing. I would argue that one of the places we most need that transparency is when it comes to the price of prescription drugs.

As I am sure my colleague knows, the cost of prescription drugs is probably the biggest cost driver right now in increases in healthcare. Yet we in Congress and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid are stymied because they can't negotiate with the big drug companies to lower the prices of prescription drugs and to make that more transparent to consumers.

The Veterans' Administration can negotiate for the cost of prescription drugs. If you talk to any veteran about the cost of their prescription drugs and compare them to what people are paying in the marketplace, there is a huge difference because they have that ability to negotiate.

I am sure that at some point we could probably find some agreement on transparency that would make sense. I

think what my colleague is proposing is not something that has had a chance to go through the HELP Committee and, therefore, would need a further look. I would want to know what hospitals in New Hampshire, the doctors, consumers, and the insurance department in my State would have to say about that. Until I find that out, I would have to object to what my colleague is proposing, but I hope we could work together to address the challenges that my constituents—and I am sure his constituents—are facing because of the cost of healthcare.

He talked about the failure of the Affordable Care Act. Actually, in New Hampshire, we have over 90,000 people who have now gotten coverage for health insurance because of the Affordable Care Act. Through the expansion of Medicaid, we have reduced the number of uninsured in New Hampshire to half the number we had before we passed the Affordable Care Act.

What my legislation would do is help people understand what the filing period is and how to sign up for the Affordable Care Act and health insurance.

In fact, under the Affordable Care Act as it exists now, according to estimates from the administration, approximately 54 percent of Granite Staters who are shopping for coverage on healthcare.gov are eligible for a plan with net monthly premiums of less than \$75, after accounting for tax credits, and nearly 40 percent of Granite Staters shopping on healthcare.gov can find a plan with net monthly premiums under \$10.

Now, the cautionary note is that when constituents of mine or in Indiana or anywhere else in the country are shopping for plans, they need to watch out for those short-term, limited-duration insurance plans—what are commonly called junk plans—because they are not required to cover preexisting conditions. I was pleased to hear my colleague from Indiana say that for existing conditions, coverage is important.

Those junk plans are not required to provide coverage for essential health benefits, like maternity care, prescription drugs, and mental health services. If you don't pay very careful attention when you go on the healthcare.gov website, you can be redirected to third-party insurance broker sites that sell both junk plans and ACA-compliant marketplace plans. That creates further confusion for customers. What we heard is that those insurance brokers are able to charge multiple times the price for those plans for their fee than they are for plans under the Affordable Care Act.

The administration has been allowing these links to redirect consumers to sites that sell junk plans, even though the ACA expressly prohibits any health insurance exchange from making available any plans that are not qualified health plans under the Affordable Care Act.

A number of my colleagues and I have been pressing the administration to conduct better oversight of brokers to ensure that healthcare.gov customers are not being sold junk plans.

I urge consumers, when they go on the website, to make sure they stay on the healthcare.gov website or their State's official health insurance exchange website when they are shopping for coverage. Be careful when you click on links that provide assistance from third-party insurance brokers.

I encourage Granite Staters and people across this country who need health insurance coverage to take a look at their options between now and December 15, during this year's open enrollment period. There is still time to enroll. It is important to tell your friends and neighbors and your family members who may not know about open enrollment because the amount of money available for outreach has been reduced so dramatically.

When the administration was trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act and this Senate voted, Americans across the country made their voices heard. Now we need that same level of engagement to raise awareness of this year's open enrollment and overcome this administration's sabotage of the ACA.

Thank you. And if it was not clear earlier, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard to the modification.

Is there objection to the original request?

The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, we have made progress here this evening in the sense that my colleague has brought up another topic—transparency for prescriptions.

Across the board, when it comes to hospitals and exposing their charge practices, drug companies becoming transparent and competing, health insurance companies getting rid of the secret agreements behind the scenes, and even practitioners, publish your prices in print or on the web so we as employers and consumers of healthcare can try to make the right decisions and bring costs down.

I do object to the original request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Dan R. Brouillette, of Texas, to be Secretary of Energy.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, John

Cornyn, Mike Crapo, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, John Thune, Steve Daines, Thom Tillis, Kevin Cramer, Chuck Grassley, Tom Cotton, Rick Scott, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow, the Chair lay before the Senate the House message to accompany H.R. 3055. I further ask unanimous consent that Senator PAUL or his designee be recognized to offer a motion to concur with further amendment, the text of which is at the desk, and following 2 minutes of debate equally divided, Senator SHELBY or his designee be recognized to make a motion to table the Paul motion. Further, I ask that following disposition of the Paul motion, the majority leader or his designee be recognized to make a motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment; finally, that notwithstanding rule XXII, if cloture is filed on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment that the vote on the cloture motion occur immediately and that if cloture is invoked, the postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate vote on the motion to concur with no intervening action or debate.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, November 21; 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 that the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Brouillette nomination.

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

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

CUBA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, since the onset of the Trump Presidency, the White House has issued a steady stream of executive orders to reverse the policy of engagement with Cuba begun by President Obama. Those decisions have largely curtailed travel by law-abiding Americans to Cuba who seek to participate in people-to-people exchanges, patronize Cuban private businesses, and otherwise experience Cuban culture.

Cuba is the only country in the world to which Americans cannot travel freely, other than North Korea, because President Trump apparently believes it is his sole prerogative to tell Americans where they can travel and spend their own money.

I have spoken about the need for engagement with Cuba many times. It is in our national interest because our past policy of unilateral sanctions and isolation—enforced for more than half a century—failed to achieve any of its objectives and because engagement with the people of other countries is the way we promote our values and protect our interests.

This is especially true when the foreign government is one with which we have profound disagreements, like Russia, China, Egypt, Turkey; it is a long list. But no one is proposing that we prevent Americans from traveling to those countries, and if they did, it would be strongly opposed by Republicans and Democrats alike.

Today, our Embassy in Havana is operating on a shoestring. Whereas there used to be more than 50 direct hire staff, today there are fewer than 18. The Cuban Embassy in Washington has also been reduced to a shell of what it used to be. As a result, the ability of both governments to process visas and conduct diplomacy is at a virtual standstill.

Cubans who seek visas to travel to the U.S. today to participate in educational programs, cultural, entrepreneurial, or scientific exchanges have to travel to Trinidad, Mexico, or some other country to apply at our embassies there. The cost to do so far exceeds what the vast majority of Cubans can

afford, so travel by Cubans to the U.S. has been reduced to a trickle compared to what it was before.

The White House has curtailed most air and sea travel to Cuba, so travel by Americans has also plummeted. This has wreaked havoc on fledgling Cuban private businesses, which depend on American customers. The administration seems utterly unconcerned, focused instead on punishing the Cuban Government for its support of Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela. This is nothing new to the Cuban authorities, and it empowers hardliners in the Cuban Government who opposed engagement with the United States in the first place and who are more comfortable building alliances with counterparts in Russia, China, and North Korea with whom they share a common ideology and disdain for the United States.

I recognize that the Trump administration has no reluctance to hold Cuba to a standard that it does not hold for other authoritarian regimes. In fact, if President Trump were consistent he would be praising his Cuban counterpart as a friend or great leader, the way he praises Kim Jung Un, Xi Jinping, Abdel Fattah al Sisi, Rodrigo Duterte, Vladimir Putin, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and other autocrats.

But despite this hypocrisy, why don't we at least increase the number of consular officers at our embassies so Americans and Cubans can visit each other's countries? I understand that we have yet to determine the cause of illnesses suffered by U.S. Embassy personnel in Cuba, for which there is no evidence implicating the Cuban Government, despite kneejerk claims by some to the contrary. But the last such incident was more than a year ago, and there are certainly U.S. Foreign Service Officers who would welcome the opportunity to serve in Havana. Both governments should be working to create favorable conditions for restaffing each other's consular services so they can better serve the people of our two countries.

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

● Ms. HARRIS. Mr. President, I was absent, but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 358, the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 487, Robert J. Luck, of Florida, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Mr. President, I was absent, but had I been present I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 359, the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 488, Barbara Lagoa, of Florida, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.●

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon

such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 19-59, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of India for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$1.0210 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

CHARLES W. HOOPER,
Lieutenant General, USA, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19-59

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of India.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$561.4 billion.
Other \$459.6 billion.

Total \$1.0210 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Up to thirteen (13) MK 45 5 inch/62 caliber (MOD 4) naval guns.

Up to three thousand five hundred (3,500) D349 Projectile, BL&P 5"/54 MK 92 MOD 1 Ammunition.

Non-MDE: Also included are other ammunition, spare parts, personnel training and equipment training, publications and technical data, transportation, U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance and other related logistics support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (IN-P-LAU).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: November 19, 2019.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

India—MK 45 Gun System

The Government of India has requested to buy up to thirteen (13) MK 45 5 inch/62 caliber (MOD 4) naval guns and three thousand five

hundred (3,500) D349 Projectile, 5"/54 MK 92 MOD 1 Ammunition. Also included are other ammunition, spare parts, personnel training and equipment training, publications and technical data, transportation, U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance and other related logistics support. The total estimated cost is \$1.0210 billion.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of a strategic regional partner.

The proposed sale will improve India's capability to meet current and future threats from enemy weapon systems. The MK-45 Gun System will provide the capability to conduct anti-surface warfare and anti-air defense missions while enhancing interoperability with U.S. and other allied forces. India will use the enhanced capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen its homeland defense.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be BAE Systems Land and Armaments, Minneapolis, Minnesota with gun manufacturing in Louisville, Kentucky. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale. Any offset agreement required by India will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor(s).

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of additional U.S. Government and/or contractor representatives to India. However, U.S. Government or contractor personnel in country visits will be required on a temporary basis in conjunction with program technical oversight and support requirements.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19-59

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The MK-45 Gun System is a U.S. naval artillery gun mount consisting of 127 mm (5 inch) L54 Mark 19 Gun on Mark 45 Mount. The highest level of release of the subsystem is UNCLASSIFIED. The highest level of information that could be disclosed by a proposed sale or by testing of the end item is UNCLASSIFIED; the highest level that must be disclosed for production, maintenance, or training is UNCLASSIFIED. Reverse engineering would not reveal venerable information.

2. A determination has been made that India can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This proposed sale is necessary to further the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

3. All defense articles and services listed on this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of India.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH, Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipu-

lates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA, November 19, 2019.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 19-63 concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Morocco for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$4.25 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

CHARLES W. HOOPER,
Lieutenant General, USA,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19-63

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Kingdom of Morocco.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$3.00 billion.

Other \$1.25 billion.

Total \$4.25 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Thirty-six (36) AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopters (24 new, 12 optional).

Seventy-nine (79) T700-GE-701 D Engines (72 installed, 6 spares).

Thirty-six (36) AN/ASQ-170 Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sight/AN/AAR-11 Modernized Pilot Night Vision Sensors (M-TADS/PNVS).

Eighteen (18) AN/APG-78 Fire Control Radars (FCR) with Radar Electronic Units (REU).

Eighteen (18) AN/APR-48B Modernized Radar Frequency Interferometers (MRFI).

Five hundred fifty-one (551) AGM-114R Hellfire Missiles (441 new, 110 optional).

Sixty (60) AGM-114L Hellfire Missiles.

Seventy-two (72) M36E9 Hellfire Captive Air Training Missiles (CATM).

Five hundred eighty-eight (588) Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) Kits (478 installed, 110 optional).

Seventy-eight (78) Embedded Global Positioning Systems with Inertial Navigation (EGIs) (72 installed, 6 spares).

Thirty-nine (39) AAR-57 Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS) (36 installed, 3 spares).

Two hundred (200) AIM-92H Stinger Missiles.

Non-MDE: Also included are twenty-one

(21) Manned-Unmanned Teaming-2 (MUMT-2) video receivers (18 installed, 3

spares); thirty-nine (39) Manned-Unmanned Teaming-2 (MUMT-2) air-air-ground kits (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/APR-39D(V)2 radar signal detecting sets (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/AVR-2B laser detecting sets (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/APX-123 or AN/APX-123A common transponders (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) IDM-401 Improved Data Modems (36 new, 3 spares); six (6) Link-16 terminals; thirty-nine (39) Improved Countermeasure Dispensing System (ICMD) (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/ARN-149 (V)3 automatic direction finders (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) Doppler ASN-157 Doppler radar velocity sensors (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/APN-209 radar altimeters (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/ARN-153 Tactical Air Navigation (TACAN) sets (36 installed, 3 spares); four (4) TACAN ground stations; thirty-six (36) Very High Frequency Omni-Directional Range/Instrument Landing Systems (VOR/ILS) (36 installed, 3 new); twelve (12) AN/PYQ-10(C) simple key loader (12 new); thirty-six (36) M230E1 + M139 AWS automatic gun (36 new); eighty-one (81) M261 rocket launchers (72 new, 9 spares); seventy-eight (78) M299 missile launchers (72 new, 6 spares); fifty-three (53) Stinger Air-to-Air launchers (53 new); twenty-nine (29) Stinger Captive Flight Trainers (CFT) (29 new); eight (8) Stinger Aerial Handling Trainers (AHT) (8 new); five thousand two hundred sixteen (5,216) 2.75-inch rockets (3,896 new, 1,320 optional); ninety-three thousand (93,000) 30mm rounds (65,500 new, 27,500 optional); secure voice radios; training devices; communication systems; helmets; simulators; generators; transportation and organization equipment; spare and repair parts; support equipment; tools and test equipment; technical data and publications; personnel training and training equipment; U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance, technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics support.

(iv) Military Department: Army.

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: MO-B-UTN.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: November 19, 2019.

* As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Morocco—AH-64E Helicopters

The Government of Morocco has requested a possible sale of thirty-six (36) AH-64E Apache attack helicopters (24 new, 12 optional); seventy-nine (79) T700-GE-701D engines (72 installed, 6 spares); thirty-six (36) AN/ASQ-170 Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sight/AN/AAR-11 Modernized Pilot Night Vision Sensors (M-TADS/PNVs); eighteen (18) AN/APG-78 Fire Control Radars (FCR) with Radar Electronic Units (REU); eighteen (18) AN/APR-48B Modernized-Radar Frequency Interferometers (MRFI); five hundred fifty-one (551) AGM-114R Hellfire missiles (441 new, 110 optional); sixty (60) AGM-114L Hellfire missiles; seventy-two (72) M36E9 Hellfire Captive Air Training Missiles (CATM); five hundred eighty-eight (588) Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) kits (478 installed, 110 optional); seventy-eight (78) Embedded Global Positioning Systems with Inertial Navigation (EGIs) (72 installed, 6 spares); thirty-nine (39) AAR-57 Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS) (36 installed, 3 spares); and two hundred (200) AIM-92H Stinger missiles. Also included are twenty-one (21) Manned-Unmanned Teaming-2

(MUMT-2) video receivers (18 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) Manned-Unmanned Teaming-2 (MUMT-2) air-air-ground kits (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/APR-39D(V)2 radar signal detecting sets (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/AVR-2B laser detecting sets (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/APX-123 or AN/APX-123A common transponders (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) IDM-401 Improved Data Modems (36 new, 3 spares); six (6) Link-16 terminals; thirty-nine (39) Improved Countermeasure Dispensing System (ICMD) (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/ARN-149 (V)3 automatic direction finders (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) Doppler ASN-157 Doppler radar velocity sensors (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/APN-209 radar altimeters (36 installed, 3 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/ARN-153 Tactical Air Navigation (TACAN) sets (36 installed, 3 spares); four (4) TACAN ground stations; thirty-six (36) Very High Frequency Omni-Directional Range/Instrument Landing Systems (VOR/ILS) (36 installed, 3 new); twelve (12) AN/PYQ-10(C) simple key loader (12 new); thirty-six (36) M230E1 + M139 AWS automatic gun (36 new); eighty-one (81) M261 rocket launchers (72 new, 9 spares); seventy-eight (78) M299 missile launchers (72 new, 6 spares); fifty-three (53) Stinger Air-to-Air launchers (53 new); twenty-nine (29) Stinger Captive Flight Trainers (CFT) (29 new); eight (8) Stinger Aerial Handling Trainers (AHT) (8 new); five thousand two hundred sixteen (5,216) 2.75-inch rockets (3,896 new, 1,320 optional); ninety-three thousand (93,000) 30mm rounds (65,500 new, 27,500 optional); secure voice radios; training devices; communication systems; helmets; simulators; generators; transportation and organization equipment; spare and repair parts; support equipment; tools and test equipment; technical data and publications; personnel training and training equipment; U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance, technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics support. The estimated cost is \$4.25 billion.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a major Non-NATO ally that is an important force for political stability and economic progress in North Africa.

The proposed sale will improve Morocco's capability to meet current and future threats, and will enhance interoperability with U.S. forces and other allied forces. Morocco will use the enhanced capability to strengthen its homeland defense and provide close air support to its forces. Morocco will have no difficulty absorbing the Apache aircraft into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and services will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractors involved in this program will be Boeing Company, Mesa, AZ and Lockheed Martin, Orlando, FL. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale. The purchaser typically requests offsets. Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor(s).

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the assignment of eleven U.S. Government personnel and three contractor representatives to Morocco as part of the Technical Assistance Fielding Team and Field Service Representatives.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19-63

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act
Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopter weapon system contains communications and target identification equipment, navigation equipment, aircraft survivability equipment, displays, and sensors. The airframe itself does not contain sensitive technology; however, the pertinent equipment listed below will be either installed on the aircraft or included in the sale. The highest classification of the AH-64E Apache Helicopter is CONFIDENTIAL, and the highest classification of data and information is SECRET.

a. The AN/ASQ-170 Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sight/ AN/AAQ-11 Pilot Night Vision Sensor (MTADS/PNVs) provides day, night, and limited adverse weather target information, as well as night navigation capabilities. The PNVs provides thermal imaging that permits nap-of-the-earth flight to, from, and within the battle area, while TADS provides the co-pilot gunner with search, detection, recognition, and designation by means of Direct View Optics (DVO), EII television, and Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) sighting systems that may be used singularly or in combinations. Hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. Technical manuals for authorized maintenance levels are UNCLASSIFIED.

b. The AN/APG-78 Fire Control Radar (FCR) is an active, low-probability of intercept, millimeter-wave radar, combined with a passive AN/APR-48B Modernized Radar Frequency Interferometer (M-RFI) mounted on top of the helicopter mast. The FCR Ground Targeting Mode detects, locates, classifies and prioritizes stationary or moving armored vehicles, tanks and mobile air defense systems as well as hovering helicopters, and fixed wing aircraft in normal flight. If desired, the radar data can be used to refer targets to the regular electro-optical Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sight (MTADS). The content of these items is classified SECRET. User Data Module (UDM) on the RFI processor, contains the Radio Frequency threat library. The UDM, which is a hardware assemblage, is classified CONFIDENTIAL when programmed.

c. The AN/APR-48B Modernized Radar Frequency Interferometer (M-RFI) is an updated version of the passive radar detection and direction finding system. It utilizes a detachable UDM on the M-RFI processor, which contains the Radar Frequency (RF) threat library. The UDM, which is a hardware assemblage item is classified CONFIDENTIAL when programmed. Hardware becomes CLASSIFIED when populated with threat parametric data. Releasable technical manuals are UNCLASSIFIED/Restricted distribution.

d. The AGM-114R is used against heavy and light armored targets, thin skinned vehicles, urban structures, bunkers, caves and personnel. The missile is Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) based, with a variable delay fuse, improved safety and reliability. The highest level for release of the AGM-114R is SECRET. The highest level of classified information that could be disclosed by a proposed sale or by testing of the end item is up to and including SECRET. The highest level that must be disclosed for production, maintenance, or training is up to and including SECRET. Vulnerability data, countermeasures, vulnerability/susceptibility analyses, and threat definitions are classified SECRET or CONFIDENTIAL. Reverse engineering could reveal SECRET information.

e. The Hellfire M36E9 CATM is a flight-training missile that consists of a functional

guidance section coupled to an inert missile bus. The M36E9 CATM does not have a functional rocket motor or warhead, and cannot be launched. The missile has an operational semi-active laser seeker that can search for and lock-on to laser-designated targets. It functions like a tactical missile (without launch capability) during captive carry on the aircraft, making it suitable for training the aircrew in simulated Hellfire missile target acquisition and lock. The missile comes in a reusable aluminum container designed to protect the missile from shock, vibration, and other environmental conditions encountered during shipment, handling, and storage. The highest level for release of the CATM is SECRET, based upon the software. The highest level of classified information that could be disclosed by a proposed sale or by testing of the end item is SECRET; the highest level that must be disclosed for production, maintenance, or training is CONFIDENTIAL. Reverse engineering could reveal confidential information. Vulnerability data, countermeasures, vulnerability/susceptibility analyses, and threat definitions are classified SECRET or CONFIDENTIAL.

f. The Embedded Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation System plus Multi Mode Receiver (EGI+MMR). The aircraft has two EGIs which use internal accelerometers, rate gyro measurements, and external sensor measurements to estimate the aircraft state, provides aircraft flight and position data to aircraft systems. The EGI is a velocity-aided, strap down, ring laser gyro based inertial unit. The EGI unit houses a GPS receiver. The receiver is capable of operating in either non-encrypted or encrypted. When keyed, the GPS receiver will automatically use anti-spoof/jam capabilities when they are in use. The EGI will retain the key through power on/off/on cycles. Because of safeguards built into the EGI, it is not considered classified when keyed. Integrated within the EGI is an Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) for processing functions. Each EGI also houses a Multi-Mode Receiver (MMR). The MMR is incorporated to provide for reception of ground based NAVAID signals for instrument aided flight. Provides IMC I IFR integration and certification of improved Embedded Global Positioning System and Inertial (EGI) unit, with attached MMR, with specific cockpit instrumentation allows Apaches to operate within the worldwide IFR route structure. Also includes integration of the Common Army Aviation Map (CAAM), Area Navigation (RNAV), Digital Aeronautical Flight Information File (DAFIF) and Global Air Traffic Management (GATM) compliance.

g. The AAR-57 Common Missile Warning System (CMWS) detects energy emitted by threat missiles in-flight, evaluates potential false alarm emitters in the environment, declares validity of threat and selects appropriate countermeasures. The CMWS consists of an Electronic Control Unit (ECU), Electro-Optic Missile Sensors (EOMSS), and Sequencer and Improved Countermeasures Dispenser (ICMD). The ECU hardware is classified CONFIDENTIAL; releasable technical manuals for operation and maintenance are classified SECRET.

h. The AN/APR-39 Radar Signal Detecting Set is a system that provides warnings of radar-directed air defense threats and allows appropriate countermeasures. This is the 1553 databus compatible configuration. The hardware is classified CONFIDENTIAL when programmed with threat data; releasable technical manuals for operation and maintenance are classified CONFIDENTIAL; releasable technical data (technical performance) is classified SECRET. The system can be programmed with threat data provided by the purchasing country.

i. The Stinger RMP Block I Missile, hardware, embedded software object code and op-

erating documentation contain sensitive technology and are classified CONFIDENTIAL. The highest classification of the Stinger 92H Reprogrammable Micro-Processor (RMP) Block I missile hardware is CONFIDENTIAL, and the highest classification of data and information is SECRET. The guidance section of the missile and tracking head trainer contain highly sensitive technology and are classified CONFIDENTIAL. Missile System hardware components contain sensitive critical technologies. Stinger Block I critical technology is primarily in the area of design and production know-how and not end-items. Information on countermeasures vulnerability to electronic countermeasures, system performance capabilities and effectiveness, simulation and test data and software source code are classified up to SECRET.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. A determination has been made that Morocco can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Morocco.

REMEMBERING GERT BOYLE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to remember the remarkable life of my friend Gert Boyle and her many economic and philanthropic contributions to Oregon.

Gert died earlier this month at the age of 95. I am one of the many fans of Columbia Sportswear—and there are an awful lot of us in Oregon—who admired Gert and saw her as synonymous with the iconic Oregon company she led. This force of nature came to Oregon after fleeing Nazi Germany with her family in 1937. It is an immigrant story she shared with my parents, who also fled the Nazis. Like so many other refugees welcomed to America over the centuries, Gert arrived to America ready to work and eager to contribute. She did both in spades, adding her own significant chapter to America's proud history of immigrant successes.

She was a pioneer, a woman running a company at a time when that was unfortunately even more rare than women CEOs are today. When Gert's husband Neal died unexpectedly in 1970, she stepped in to replace him as president of what was then a tiny local company weighed down by debt. The challenge was mighty, but so was Gert. She became identified everywhere with Columbia Sportswear as she grew this Oregon business into a national and international brand. It now generates net annual revenue of \$3 billion and employs more than 6,500 people. Business school students and Oregon historians alike will always remember Gert for that exceptional run, as will I. And

she gave back along the way, generously supporting Special Olympics and the Knight Cancer Institute at Oregon Health and Science University in Portland. She was also a hell of a lot of fun, as evidenced by her hilarious role spoofing herself in a 1980s Columbia Sportswear ad campaign as “one tough mother.”

I close by citing two anecdotes about Gert among many in the recent obituaries chronicling her amazing life. I think both capture her toughness and sense of humor perfectly. One of the two anecdotes comes from Kerry Tymchuk, executive director of the Oregon Historical Society. He said, “When she took over, you know, she was a woman CEO in a business where there weren't many women CEOs, in the sports apparel business. She was discriminated against and there was this famous incident where she picked up her phone and the fellow on the other end said, ‘I want to speak to the CEO,’ and she said ‘speaking,’ and he said, ‘but you're a woman,’ and she said, ‘you know, I noticed that when I got up this morning.’”

The other anecdote comes from Gert herself. In another obituary, she was quoted as having said, “After my husband died, I said, ‘It's the same ballgame—it's just a different coach. I might not know what I'm doing, but we're going to do it my way.’” Gert certainly did do it her way. And her company, its employees, and our entire State of Oregon are much the better for it.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JAY HILDEBRANDT

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 40-year career of a great Idahoan, Jay Hildebrandt, co-anchor of KIFI Local News 8 in Idaho Falls, ID. Jay has covered the news from KIFI since 1984 and has become a trusted, familiar face to east Idaho residents. Viewers have come to know him as a dedicated professional who gets to the bottom of important stories, while treating all people with dignity and respect.

Motivated by his conviction to share positive stories, Jay leaves behind an inspiring legacy through the uplifting segments he produced over the past four decades. In one such weekly segment titled “Wednesday's Child,” Jay introduced children in need of a big brother or sister figure, a foster home or an adoptive family. Jay produced this segment for 28 years, and many children found permanent homes as a result. In recognition of his advocacy, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute honored him and his wife Sally as “Angels in Adoption.” In addition to this heartwarming segment, Jay also highlighted hundreds of high-achieving local high school seniors through his “Distinguished Student” weekly report. In 1990, Karole Honas

joined Jay at the anchor desk. Their contrasting perspectives and reporting styles created a compelling synergy that kept viewers watching for over 29 years.

When he isn't reporting the news, Jay is an active volunteer in his community. His service includes participation on the Governor's Children's Trust Fund Board, Region VII Health and Welfare Advisory Board, and the Safe Place Advisory Board. He also serves his community as an adjunct professor in the communications department at Brigham Young University-Idaho, where he passes along his expertise, reporting philosophies and lessons that can only be learned through experience to the next generation of journalists.

I would like to commend Jay for over 40 years of bringing the news to Idahoans and congratulate him on his retirement. He will surely stay busy with his wife Sally, their five grown children, and 15 grandchildren. His many dedicated years on the air have left a record of a kind and gentle individual, demonstrating positivity in words and actions.●

RECOGNIZING LEISURELAND RV CENTER

● 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 U.S. Senator from the great State of Idaho, it is my pleasure to recognize Leisureland RV Center in Boise as the veteran-owned Idaho Small Business of the Day for November 20, 2019.

Leisureland RV Center is owned and operated by U.S. Air Force veteran John DeHoff and his wife Carina. John DeHoff served in the U.S. Air Force for 25 years, and now, he and his wife travel across the United States hand-selecting preowned recreational vehicles—RVs—to restore and resell at their Boise location. The DeHoffs opened Leisureland RV Center in 2014 to combine their passions for using recreational vehicles and renovating cars.

The company has a 10,000-square-foot maintenance facility on-site where ex-

perienced technicians restore high-end RVs and resell them at market value. In addition to selling refurbished RVs, Leisureland RV Center offers basic RV maintenance services and large-scale RV repairs. Leisureland RV Center's top priority is customer satisfaction. Employees assess the needs of each customer to ensure new buyers select an RV that will fit their lifestyle. This dedication to exceptional customer service is one reason many people travel from across the West to purchase an RV from Leisureland RV Center.

Congratulations to John and Carina DeHoff and all of the employees at Leisureland RV Center for being selected as the veteran-owned Idaho Small Business of the Day for November 20, 2019. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

TRIBUTE TO GREGORY FERRY

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am proud to recognize Captain Gregory Ferry of Hooksett as November's Granite Stater of the Month for his leadership in strengthening the partnership between New Hampshire's law enforcement and the Special Olympics.

Captain Ferry recently retired from the New Hampshire State Police after 25 years of dedicated service to the people of New Hampshire. Known for going the extra mile to support his fellow officers in the line of duty, Captain Ferry led outside of work as well. Throughout his career, even while carrying out the full duties of a New Hampshire State Trooper, Captain Ferry volunteered with the Special Olympics. He has been involved in everything from handing out medals to the athletes to the Law Enforcement Torch Run.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run helps bring awareness to the Special Olympics. Captain Ferry would help his fellow officers run what is called the "Flame for Hope" all across New Hampshire, for a total distance of 550 miles. Since the run's inception 35 years ago, New Hampshire law enforcement has raised more than \$5.5 million for Special Olympics, and for 25 of those 35 years, Captain Ferry was at its helm.

After 17 years of participating in the program, Captain Ferry decided to get even more involved and was chosen as State police liaison to the Special Olympics.

In this role, Captain Ferry oversaw the expansion of law enforcement's partnership with the program, which included recruiting more liaisons, expanding law enforcement's participation in the Summer and Winter Games, and increasing fundraising efforts.

As a symbol of Captain Ferry's strong relationship with the program, he was selected to represent New Hampshire at the 2019 Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi, where he participated in the Torch Run across the United Arab Emirates. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for Cap-

tain Ferry to represent both New Hampshire law enforcement and the Special Olympics program on the world stage.

Captain Ferry has said that the most rewarding part of his involvement in the Special Olympics has been the special bonds that he has formed with the athletes, which extend beyond the playing field. He continues to keep in touch with some of the athletes on social media and makes sure to give them a hug whenever he sees them outside of the program.

Captain Ferry's daughter, Jillian, also happens to be a Special Olympian. Her favorite event is bowling, and she has beaten dad on a few occasions.

From serving as a public safety officer who went out of his way to support his fellow officers and protect his community, to providing a sense of security for the athletes in the Special Olympics program who have learned to trust him, Captain Ferry has demonstrated what it means to be a dedicated public servant.

Thank you, Captain Ferry, for your service to our great State, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 5084. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require the submission by issuers of data relating to diversity and for other purposes.

At 5:50 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 862. An act to extend the sunset for the collateral requirements for Small Business Administration disaster loans.

S. 1838. An act to amend the Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992, and for other purposes.

S. 2710. An act to prohibit the commercial export of covered munitions items to the Hong Kong Police Force.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 5084. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require the submission by issuers of data relating to diversity and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2920. A bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, 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-3237. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Organic Program; Amendments to the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances per April 2018 NOSB Recommendations (Crops and Handling)" (RIN0581-AD80) (Docket No. AMS-NOP-18-0051) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3238. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Cotton Board Rules and Regulations: Adjusting Supplemental Assessment on Imports (2019 Amendments)" ((7 CFR Part 1205) (Docket No. AMS-CN-19-0007)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3239. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tomatoes Grown in Florida; Modification of Handling Regulations" ((7 CFR Part 966) (Docket No. AMS-SC-18-0075)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3240. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Yemen that was declared in Executive Order 13611 of May 16, 2012; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3241. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Central African Republic that was declared in Executive Order 13667 of May 12, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3242. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Syria that was declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3243. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Capital Rule: Simplifications to the Capital Rule Pursuant to the Economic Growth and Regulatory Paperwork Reduction Act of 1996; Revised Effective Date" (RIN1557-AE70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3244. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulatory Capital Rule: Capital Simplification for Qualifying Community Bank Organizations" (RIN1557-AE59) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3245. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests in, and Relationships with, Hedge Fund and Private Equity Funds" (RIN1557-AE27) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3246. A communication from the Administrator and Chief Executive Officer, Bonneville Power Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Annual Report for fiscal year 2019; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-3247. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Hot Springs National Park; Bicycling" (RIN1024-AE50) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-3248. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Redesignation of the Duval County Ozone Unclassifiable Area" (FRL No. 10002-48-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3249. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Arizona; Maricopa County Air Quality Department" (FRL No. 10002-13-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3250. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Georgia; Miscellaneous Revisions" (FRL No. 10002-46-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3251. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Illinois; Emissions Reduction Market System Sunsetting" (FRL No. 10002-26-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3252. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Second Limited Maintenance Plans for 1997 Ozone NAAQS" (FRL No. 10002-25-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3253. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designated Facilities and Pollutants; West Virginia; Control of Emissions from Existing Municipal Solid Waste Landfills" (FRL No. 9999-80-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3254. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances (17-3); Technical Correction" ((RIN2070-AB27) (FRL No. 10001-43)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3255. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances (18-1)" ((RIN2070-AB27) (FRL No. 10001-30)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3256. 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 "Optional Standard Mileage Rates Procedures" (Rev. Proc. 2019-46) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3257. 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 "Ownership Attribution for Purposes of Determining Whether a Problem Is Related to a Controlled Foreign Corporation; Rents Derived in the Active Conduct of a Trade or Business" ((RIN1545-BM90) (TD 9883)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3258. 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 "Electronic Filing of the Report of Health Insurance Provider Information" ((RIN1545-BN57) (TD 9881)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3259. 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 Hospital Outpatient PPS Policy Changes and Payment Rates and Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment System Policy Changes and Payment Rates: Price Transparency Requirements for Hospitals to Make Standard Charges Public" (RIN0938-AU22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3260. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2019-0108 - 2019-0114); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3261. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to sections 36(c) and (d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad and the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services, abroad controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to Italy and Qatar to support the manufacture, integration, assembly, operation, training, testing, and maintenance of 300 Blackout 5.56mm upper and lower receivers and weapon assembly in the amount of \$1,000,000 or

more (Transmittal No. DDTC 19-031); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3262. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of Acquisition and Assistance, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Agency for International Development Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR): Revisions to the Incentive Awards Program for Personal Services Contractors (PSCs)" (RIN0412-AA93) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3263. 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 Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3264. A communication from the Associate Commissioner for Legislative Affairs, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Drug Shortages: Root Causes and Potential Solutions"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3265. A communication from the Director of Congressional Relations and Government Affairs, Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Office's October 2019 quarterly report to Congress (OSS-2019-1225); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3266. A communication from the Director, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2019 Annual Financial Report (AFR); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3267. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Department's fiscal year 2019 Annual Financial Report (AFR); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3268. A communication from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and the Semiannual Management Report on the Status of Audits for the period from April 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3269. A communication from the Chairman of the Board, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's consolidated report addressing the Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA or Integrity Act) and the Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3270. A communication from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3271. A joint communication from the Secretary of Labor and the Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Pension

Benefit Guaranty Corporation's Annual Report for fiscal year 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3272. A communication from the Chairman, International Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2019 Annual Financial Report (AFR); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3273. A communication from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's fiscal year 2019 Annual Financial Report (AFR); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3274. A communication from the Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's fiscal year 2019 Annual Financial Report (AFR); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3275. A communication from the Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2019 Annual Financial Report (AFR); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3276. A communication from the Assistant Director of the Office of Policy, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementing Bilateral and Multilateral Asylum Cooperative Agreements Under the Immigration and Nationality Act" (RIN1125-AA98) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-3277. A communication from the Division Director for Policy, Legislation, and Regulation, Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Modernizing Recruitment Requirements for the Temporary Employment of H-2B Foreign Workers in the United States" (RIN1205-AB91) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-3278. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)" (RIN0790-AI27) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 13, 2019; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-3279. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Deputy Secretary, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3280. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3281. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0439))

received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3282. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0254)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3283. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0485)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3284. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0807)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3285. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0690)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3286. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Ipeco Pilot and Co-Pilot Seats" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0260)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3287. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0583)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3288. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier Inc., Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0536)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3289. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to

law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0582)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3290. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Aviointeriors S.p.A. Centaurus Passenger Seats” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0557)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3291. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0866)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3292. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “IFR Altitudes; Miscellaneous Amendments” ((RIN2120-AA63) (Docket No. 31282)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3293. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace and Establishment of Class E Airspace; Spokane, WA” ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2018-0363)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3294. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel in the Central Aleutian District of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands” (RIN0648-XY010) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3295. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XY007) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3296. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region; Commercial Closure for Atlantic Spanish Mackerel in the Northern Zone” (RIN0648-XS007) received in

the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3297. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XY006) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3298. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Spiny Lobster Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Amendment 13; Correction” (RIN0648-BI11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3299. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Exchange of Flatfish in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XG086) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3300. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; 2019 Commercial Accountability Measures; Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target Reductions” (RIN0648-XG974) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3301. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2019 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Red Snapper” (RIN0648-XS009) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3302. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska” (RIN0648-XY014) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3303. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Equal to or Greater Than 60 Feet (18.3 Meters) Length Overall Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XY020) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on No-

vember 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3304. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region; Commercial Trip Limit Reduction for King Mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone” (RIN0648-XS010) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3305. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Aleutian Islands Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648-XY019) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3306. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Requirements of the Vessel Monitoring System Type-Approval” (RIN0648-BG34) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3307. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer from NC to RI and VA” (RIN0648-XX020) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3308. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2019-2020 Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments” (RIN0648-BJ36) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3309. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries Off West Coast States; Modifications of the West Coast Recreational and Commercial Salmon Fisheries; Inseason Actions No. 6 through No. 27” (RIN0648-XW007) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. RISCH for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

David T. Fischer, of Michigan, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Morocco.

Nominee: David Fischer.

Post: Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses, have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. David T. Fischer:
Trott for Congress, Inc., \$2,700, 02/23/15, David A. Trott.
Automotive Free International Trade PAC, \$5,000, 03/25/15.
Cantor for Congress, refund, \$502, 06/08/15, Eric Cantor.
Trott for Congress, Inc., \$2,700, 06/24/15, David A. Trott.
Jeb 2016, Inc., \$2,700, 06/26/15, Jeb Bush.
Mike Bishop for Congress, \$2,700, 06/30/15, Mike Bishop.
Friends of Jason Chaffetz, \$2,700, 09/10/15, Jason Chaffetz.
Friends of Jason Chaffetz, \$2,700, 09/10/15, Jason Chaffetz.
Portman for Senate Committee, \$2,700, 09/15/15, Rob Portman.
Sedona PAC, refund, \$5,400, 11/17/15, John McCain.
Sedona PAC, refund, \$2,700, 11/17/15, John McCain.
Sedona PAC, \$2,700, 11/17/15, John McCain.
Sedona PAC, \$10,800, 11/17/15, John McCain.
Michigan Republican Party, \$10,000, 12/21/15.
Kasich for America, Inc., \$2,700, 02/29/16, John R. Kasich.
Automotive Free International Trade PAC, \$5,000, 04/20/16.
Ron Johnson for Senate Inc., \$2,700, 04/25/16, Ronald Harold Johnson.
Portman for Senate Committee, \$2,700, 05/03/16, Rob Portman.
Debbie Dingell for Congress, \$2,700, 05/17/16, Debbie Dingell.
Trump Victory, \$250,000, 05/24/16, Trump Victory.
Trump Victory, refund, \$250,000, 06/16/16, Trump Victory.
Trump Victory, \$5,400, 06/21/16, Trump Victory.
Donald J. Trump for President, Inc., \$2,700, 06/21/16, Donald J. Trump.
Donald J. Trump for President, Inc., \$2,700, 06/21/16, Donald J. Trump.
Republican National Committee, \$33,400, 06/29/16.
Republican National Committee, \$91,600, 06/29/16.
Friends of Kelly Ayotte Inc., \$1,000, 06/30/16, Kelly Ayotte.
Friends of Kelly Ayotte Inc., \$1,000, 06/30/16, Kelly Ayotte.
Marco Rubio for Senate refund, \$2,700, 06/30/16, Marco Rubio.
Marco Rubio for Senate, \$2,700, 06/30/16, Marco Rubio.
Marco Rubio for Senate, \$5,400, 06/30/16, Marco Rubio.
Friends of Todd Young, Inc., \$1,000, 08/17/16, Todd Christopher Young.
Friends of Todd Young, Inc., \$1,000, 08/17/16, Todd Christopher Young.
Friends of Todd Young, Inc., \$1,000, 08/17/16, Todd Christopher Young.
Friends of Todd Young, Inc., \$1,000, 08/17/16, Todd Christopher Young.
Friends of Paul Mitchell, \$2,700, 08/22/16, Paul Mitchell III.
Roskam for Congress Committee, \$2,700, 09/13/16, Peter Roskam.
Walberg for Congress, \$2,700, 09/14/16, Timothy L. Walberg.
Walberg Victory Fund, \$5,000, 09/15/16, Walberg Victory Fund.
Mike Bishop for Congress, \$2,700, 09/28/16, Mike Bishop.

Bergman Victory Committee, \$2,700, 09/29/16, Bergman Victory Committee.
Bergmanforcongress, \$2,700, 09/29/16, John Bergman.
NRCC, \$33,400, 09/30/16.
NRCC, \$58,900, 09/30/16.
Prosperity Action Inc., \$5,000, 09/30/16, Prosperity Action Inc.
Ryan for Congress, Inc., \$2,700, 09/30/16, Paul D. Ryan.
Team Ryan, \$100,000, 09/30/16, Team Ryan.
Fighting For Ohio Fund, \$15,000, 10/03/16, Fighting For Ohio Fund.
Brenda Lawrence for Congress, \$2,500, 10/26/16, Brenda Lulenaar Lawrence.
Friends of Todd Young, Inc., \$4,400, 10/26/16, Todd Christopher Young.
Friends of Todd Young, Inc., refund, 2,700, 10/27/16.
Republican National Committee, \$14,400, 02/03/17.
Republican National Committee, \$33,900, 02/03/17.
Republican National Committee, \$101,700, 02/03/17.
Automotive Free International Trade PAC, \$5,000, 02/21/17.
True North PAC, \$5,000, 03/08/17, Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate.
NRCC, \$25,000, 03/23/17.
Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate, \$5,400, 05/12/17, Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate.
Team Ryan, \$50,000, 06/19/17, Team Ryan.
McMorris Rodgers American Dream Project, \$2,700, 10/24/17, Cathy McMorris Rodgers.
Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate, refund, \$2,700, 12/31/17, Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate.
2. Jennifer M. Fischer (wife):
Trott for Congress, Inc., \$2,700, 02/23/15, David A. Trott.
Cantor for Congress, refund, \$219.44, 06/08/15, Eric Cantor.
Trott for Congress, Inc., \$2,700, 06/24/15, David A. Trott.
Jeb 2016, Inc., \$2,700, 06/26/15, Jeb Bush.
Mike Bishop for Congress, \$2,700, 06/30/15, Mike Bishop.
Friends of Jason Chaffetz, \$2,700, 09/10/15, Jason Chaffetz.
Friends of Jason Chaffetz, \$2,700, 09/10/15, Jason Chaffetz.
Portman for Senate Committee, \$2,700, 09/15/15, Rob Portman.
Sedona PAC, refund, \$2,700, 11/17/15, John McCain.
Sedona PAC, \$2,700, 11/17/15, John McCain.
Sedona PAC, 5,400, 11/17/15, John McCain.
Kasich for America, Inc., \$2,700, 02/29/16, John R. Kasich.
Ron Johnson for Senate Inc., \$2,700, 04/25/16, Ronald Harold Johnson.
Portman for Senate Committee, \$2,700, 05/03/16, Rob Portman.
Debbie Dingell for Congress, \$2,700, 05/17/16, Debbie Dingell.
Trump Victory, 5,400, 06/21/16.
Donald J. Trump for President, Inc., \$2,700, 06/21/16, Donald J. Trump.
Donald J. Trump for President, Inc., \$2,700, 06/21/16, Donald J. Trump.
Republican National Committee, \$33,400, 06/29/16.
Republican National Committee, \$91,600, 06/29/16.
Roskam for Congress Committee, \$2,700, 09/13/16, Peter Roskam.
Trump Victory, refund, \$5,400, 09/21/16.
Mike Bishop for Congress, \$2,700, 09/28/16, Mike Bishop.
Bergman Victory Committee, \$2,700, 09/29/16, John Bergman.
Bergmanforcongress, \$2,700, 09/29/16, John Bergman.
Friends of Todd Young, Inc., \$2,700, 10/27/16, Todd Young.
Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate, \$5,400, 05/12/17, Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate.

Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate, refund, \$2,700, 12/31/17, Jeff Flake for U.S. Senate.
3. Children and Spouses:
David T. Fischer, Jr. (son):
Romney Victory, Inc., \$1,700, 03/31/15, Mitt Romney.
Jeb 2016, Inc., \$2,700, 06/26/15, Jeb Bush.
Trott for Congress, Inc., \$1,000, 04/05/16, David A. Trott.
Automotive Free International Trade PAC, \$5,000, 02/13/17.
NRCC, \$25,000, 04/04/17.
Darcy Fischer (wife of David T. Fischer, Jr.):
Jeb 2016, Inc., \$2,700, 06/26/15, Jeb Bush.
Zachary Fischer (son):
Jeb 2016, Inc., \$2,700, 06/26/15, Jeb Bush.
Keirstead for Congress, \$1,000, 06/23/17.
Ashley Fischer (wife of Zachary Fischer):
Jeb 2016, Inc., \$2,700, 06/26/15, Jeb Bush.
Jeffrey Phelps (stepson):
Jeb 2016, Inc., \$2,700, 06/30/15, Jeb Bush.
Stefanie Phelps (wife of Jeffrey Phelps):
Jeb 2016, Inc., \$2,700, 06/30/15, Jeb Bush.
4. Parents:
Richard A. Fischer—deceased.
Jeanne M. Fischer—deceased.
5. Grandparents:
Carl H.F. Fischer—deceased.
Josephine Fischer—deceased.
Thomas C. Morgan—deceased.
Ruth E. Morgan—deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses:
Richard A. Fischer, Jr. (brother): None.
William Fischer (brother): None.
7. Sisters and Spouses: N/A.

Morse H. Tan, of Illinois, to be Ambassador at Large for Global Criminal Justice.

Nominee: Morse Tan.

Post: Ambassador at Large for Global Criminal Justice.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses, have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: Sarah Tan: None.
3. Children and Spouses: Hope Tan (age 12): None. Enoch Tan (age 10): None. Isaiah Tan (age 6): None. Moses Tan (age 4): None.
4. Parents: Minho Tan (father): None. Sunae Tan (mother): None.
5. Grandparents: Hee Pong Tan (paternal grandfather, deceased): None. Su Pong Tan (paternal grandmother): None. Won Joong Kim (maternal grandfather, deceased): None. Dang Kyung Kim (maternal grandmother): None.
6. Brothers and Spouses: None.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Alice Tan (resident of Korea): None. Inku Kang (resident of Korea): None.

Roxanne Cabral, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Nominee—Roxanne J. Cabral.

Post: Nominated (for Ambassador to the Republic of the Marshall Islands).

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: David C. Schroeder: None.
3. Children and Spouses: Quinn R. Schroeder, no spouse: None. Roman C. Schroeder,

no spouse: None; Evan S. Schroeder, no spouse: None.

4. Parents: Nancy J. Cabral (mother)—None. Roger C. Cabral (deceased 1995)—N/A. Thomas G. Schroeder (father-in-law): \$35, 2016 or 18, Republican National Committee; \$90, 2015, Rob Wittman (Va 1st); \$45, 2017, Rob Wittman; \$100, 2018, Rob Wittman; \$25, 2018, Americans for Prosperity. Nancy S. Schroeder (mother-in-law)—None.

5. Grandparents: None. All deceased prior to 2009—None.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Neal J. Cabral, no spouse None. (since 2010):

7. Sisters and Spouses: Lisa M. Cabral, no spouse: None.

Kelley Eckels Currie, of Georgia, to be Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues. Nominee: Kelley Eckels Currie.

Post: Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee.

1. Self: \$500, 3/15/2016, Marco Rubio for President.

2. Spouse: Peter MacLean Currie: none.

3. Children and Spouses: Peter MacLean Currie, Jr.: none. Sarah W. Currie: none.

4. Parents: Mary Elizabeth Price: none. Steven Lee Eckels—deceased.

5. Grandparents: all deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: n/a.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Emily Dianne Eckels: none.

Leslie Meredith Tsou, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Sultanate of Oman.

Nominee: Leslie Meredith Tsou.

Post: Sultanate of Oman.

Nominated: June 24, 2019.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$0.

2. Spouse: N/A.

3. Children and Spouses: N/A.

4. Parents: Edward and Carol Tsou: \$12.50, 11/15/18, Jacky Rosen; \$12.50, 11/15/18, Bill Nelson—Recount Fund; \$12.50, 11/14/18, Jacky Rosen; \$12.50, 11/14/18, Mike Espy; \$50.00, 10/11/18, Heidi Heitkamp; \$25.00, 10/06/18, Tim Ryan; \$25.00, 10/06/18, dccc O'Rourke; \$25.00, 10/06/18, Jacky Rosen; \$25.00, 10/06/18, Krysten Sinema; \$100.00, 10/24/17, Democratic Action; \$100.00, 10/23/17, Democratic National Committee (DNC) Marketing; \$100.00, 08/23/17, Democratic Congress; \$75.00, 07/27/17, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC); \$50.00, 07/25/17, Mark Warner; \$75.00, 07/13/17, DCCC; \$50.00, 06/22/17, Mark Warner; \$50.00, 05/26/17, Tim Kaine; \$25.00, 05/14/17, Amy Klobucher; \$75.00, 04/30/17, DCCC; \$100.00, 04/07/17, DCCC; \$25.00, 02/08/17, DCCC; \$63.00, 01/30/17, DCCC; \$50.00, 01/10/17, DCCC; \$50.00, 01/06/17, DCCC; \$100.00, 11/04/16, Hilary for America; \$50.00, 10/28/15, Kasich for America; \$50.00, 10/24/16, Hilary for America; \$50.00, 09/25/15, Bernie Sanders; \$100.00, 09/25/16, Hilary Victory Fund; \$50.00, 06/14/16, Hilary Victory Fund; \$50.00, 06/27/15, DNC Online Democrats.org; \$100.00, 05/01/15, Bernie Sanders; \$50.00, 01/16/15, Democratic Senatorial Cam-

paign Committee; \$75.00, 01/07/15, DCCC; \$75.00, 11/13/14, Mary Landrieu; \$50.00, 11/09/14, DCCC; \$100.00, 10/23/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 10/09/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 09/30/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 09/23/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 09/09/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 08/30/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 08/23/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 08/09/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 07/30/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 07/28/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 07/23/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 07/17/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 07/09/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 06/30/14, DCCC; \$50.00, 06/27/14, DCCC; \$100.00, 05/30/14, DCCC.

5. Grandparents: All Deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: N/A (no brothers).

7. Sisters and Spouses: MaryAnn Strunk (sister) and Robert Strunk (husband), \$0; Wendy Berg (sister) and David Berg (husband), \$0.

Yuri Kim, of Guam, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Albania.

Nominee: Yuri Kim.

Post: Albania.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$100, 2018, Young Kim; \$250, 2017, Bob Casey; \$2,775, 2016, Hillary Clinton.

2. Spouse: N/A.

3. Children and Spouses: N/A.

4. Parents: Kenneth Taerang Kim: 0; Jane Whayoung Kim: 0 (deceased 1997); Jin Sook Kim (step): 0.

5. Grandparents: Park Hee-soon: 0; Cheong Ku-hak: 0 (deceased 2017).

6. Brothers and Spouses: Yeong-Sae Kim: 0; Jenni Quoc Kim: 0; Guhn Woo Kim (step): 0; Min Woo Kim (step): 0.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Rebecca Hyemin Kim (step): 0.

Carmen G. Cantor, of Puerto Rico, a Career Member of the Senior Executive Service, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federated States of Micronesia.

Nominee: Carmen G. Cantor.

Post: Federated States of Micronesia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee.

1. Self: \$50, 2018, Larry Hogan; \$100, 2016, H. Clinton.

2. Spouse: Carlos A. Cantor: None.

3. Children and Spouses: Ashley N. Cantor: None. Amanda K. Cantor: None. Adriana M. Cantor: None. Carlos A. Cantor III (stepson): None. Anthony R. Cantor (stepson): None. Shannon Walko (stepdaughter) & John Walko: None.

4. Parents: Anibal Castro & Zoraida Laracunte: None.

5. Grandparents: Liborio Laracunte & Magdalena Ramirez—Deceased; Vicente Castro & Dolores Justiniano—Deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: I don't have brothers.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Zoraida Castro and Hector C. Banchs: None.

Michael George DeSombre, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Thailand.

Nominee: Michael George DeSombre.

Post: Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee.

1. Self: \$32400, 1/20/2015, Republican National Committee; \$100, 1/20/2015, Republican National Committee; \$-2400, 2/5/2015, Friends of Mike Lee Inc; \$-2700, 2/5/2015, Friends of Mike Lee Inc; \$-2700, 2/5/2015, Friends of Mike Lee Inc; \$-2400, 2/5/2015, Friends of Mike Lee Inc; \$2400, 2/5/2015, Friends of Mike Lee Inc; \$2400, 2/5/2015, Friends of Mike Lee Inc; \$2700, 2/5/2015, Friends of Mike Lee Inc; \$7800, 2/5/2015, Friends of Mike Lee Inc; \$7800, 2/5/2015, Friends of Mike Lee Inc; \$5000, 2/13/2015, Right to Rise PAC, Inc.; \$150, 4/8/2015, Republican National Committee; \$1000, 6/4/2015, Elise for Congress; \$100, 7/23/2015, Republican National Committee; \$2700, 9/9/2015, Jeb 2016, Inc.; \$250, 3/14/2016, Republican National Committee; \$250, 5/5/2017, Republican National Committee; \$33525, 6/2/2017, Republican National Committee; \$1475, 6/2/2017, Republican National Committee; \$1000, 12/14/2017, Duffy for Wisconsin; \$25000, 12/14/2017, NRSC; \$250, 1/1/2018, Michael C. Toth; \$500, 2/6/2018, Stephen Yates; \$1285, 4/16/2018, Republican National Committee; \$33715, 4/16/2018, Republican National Committee; \$100, 4/26/2018, Republican National Committee; \$100, 4/26/2018, Republican National Committee; \$100, 5/11/2018, Republican National Committee; \$-100, 5/11/2018, Republican National Committee; \$1000, 6/29/2018, Elise for Congress.

1. Spouse: \$2700, 8/7/2015, Scott Walker Inc; \$2700, 9/3/2015, Jeb 2016, Inc.

2. Children and Spouses: N/A, N/A, N/A.

3. Eugene R. DeSombre (Father): \$200, 4/11/2016, Hillary Victory Fund; \$300, 6/15/2016, Hillary Victory Fund; \$300, 6/15/2016, Hillary for America; \$500, 6/27/2016, Citizens for Lisa Madigan; \$200, 8/8/2016, DCCC; \$500, 9/26/2016, Citizens for Lisa Madigan; \$300, 10/12/2016, DCCC; \$300, 10/12/2016, DCCC; \$300, 10/12/2016, DCCC; \$300, 1/1/2017, DNC Services Corp./Dem. Nat'l Committee; \$250, 4/6/2018, SMP; \$300, 7/27/2018, DCCC; \$340, 8/23/2018, DNC Services Corp./Dem. Nat'l Committee. Nancy C. DeSombre (Mother): \$100, 12/4/2015, Tammy for Illinois; \$1000, 6/30/2015, Citizens for Lisa Madigan; \$90, 1/20/2016, Tammy for Illinois; \$45, 1/20/2016, Emily's List; \$180, 1/20/2016, Emily's List; \$45, 1/20/2016, Emily's List; \$90, 1/20/2016, Emily's List; \$100, 3/10/2016, Tammy for Illinois; \$500, 3/26/2016, Tammy for Illinois; \$90, 3/29/2016, Emily's List; \$45, 4/11/2016, Emily's List; \$500, 4/21/2016, Tammy for Illinois; \$100, 4/25/2016, Emily's List; \$90, 5/24/2016, Emily's List; \$100, 6/27/2016, Tammy for Illinois; \$100, 6/27/2016, Emily's List; \$100, 6/27/2016, Emily's List; \$150, 8/8/2016, Emily's List; \$100, 8/22/2016, Tammy for Illinois; \$100, 8/23/2016, Emily's List; \$500, 9/13/2016, Tammy for Illinois; \$50, 9/22/2016, Emily's List; \$10, 9/22/2016, Emily's List; \$100, 10/20/2016, Emily's List; \$100, 10/24/2016, Tammy for Illinois; \$100, 10/25/2016, Katie McGinty for Senate; \$100, 10/29/2016, Emily's List; \$100, 11/4/2016, Emily's List; \$225, 2/10/2017, DNC Services Corp./Dem. Nat'l Committee; \$100, 9/30/2017, Emily's List; \$100, 11/8/2017, Emily's List; \$50, 11/18/2017, Emily's List; \$50, 11/29/2017, Emily's List; \$100, 12/20/2017, Emily's List; \$100, 2/1/2018, Emily's List; \$35, 2/21/2018, Emily's List; \$50, 2/27/2018, Emily's List; \$100, 3/18/2018, Emily's List; \$50, 3/22/2018, Emily's List; \$100, 3/30/2018, Emily's List; \$35, 8/17/2018, Emily's List;

\$100, 8/18/2018, Emily's List; \$100, 8/18/2018, Emily's List; \$50, 8/26/2018, Emily's List.

4. Grandparents Names: N/A, N/A, N/A.
5. Brothers and Spouses: N/A, N/A, N/A.
6. Elizabeth DeSombre (Sister): \$25, 4/6/2016, Hillary for America; \$55.9, 4/17/2016, Hillary for America; \$25, 4/19/2016, Hillary for America; \$25, 4/19/2016, Hillary for America; \$83.45, 4/21/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 4/28/2016, Hillary for America; \$34.31, 4/30/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 4/30/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 5/23/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 5/24/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 5/26/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 5/26/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 5/27/2016, Hillary for America; \$25, 6/7/2016, Hillary for America; \$3, 6/25/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 6/25/2016, Hillary for America; \$3, 6/25/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 7/7/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 7/8/2016, Hillary Victory Fund; \$5, 7/8/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 7/22/2016, Hillary for America; \$103.45, 7/26/2016, Hillary Victory Fund; \$19, 7/26/2016, Hillary for America; \$103.45, 7/26/2016, Hillary for America; \$16.55, 7/29/2016, Hillary for America; \$16.55, 7/29/2016, Hillary Victory Fund; \$5, 8/13/2016, Hillary for America; \$19, 8/29/2016, Hillary for America; \$56.95, 9/6/2016, Hillary for America; \$56.95, 9/6/2016, Hillary Victory Fund; \$5, 10/12/2016, Hillary for America; \$25, 10/17/2016, Hillary for America; \$5, 10/21/2016, Hillary for America; \$10, 10/22/2016, Actblue; \$10, 10/26/2016, Actblue; \$25, 10/29/2016, Hillary for America; \$25, 11/2/2016, Hillary for America; \$25, 11/5/2016, Hillary for America; \$3, 6/30/2019, Elizabeth Warren; \$25, 7/9/2019, Elizabeth Warren; \$5, 7/7/2019, Kamala Harris; \$10, 7/7/2019, Kamala Harris.

Robert S. Gilchrist, of Florida, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Lithuania.

Nominee: Robert Stuart Gilchrist.
Post: Lithuania.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None, N/A, N/A.
2. Spouse: None, N/A, N/A.
3. Children and Spouses: None, N/A, N/A.
4. Parents: Deceased, N/A, N/A.
5. Grandparents: Deceased, N/A, N/A.
6. Brothers and Spouses: David Gilchrist: \$250, 10/22/18, Bob Rackleef Campaign Committee; Hilda Gilchrist: \$25, 01/15/14, Act Blue; \$5, 01/15/14, Act Blue; \$60, 01/22/14, Act Blue; \$35, 09/29/15, Act Blue; \$25, 05/16/16, Act Blue; \$25, 09/01/16, Act Blue; \$25, 10/14/16, Act Blue; \$50, 08/15/17, Act Blue; \$10, 11/10/18, Act Blue; \$50, 11/01/18, Act Blue; \$10, 11/01/18, Act Blue; Donald Gilchrist: \$250, 09/13/14, Hagan for Senate; \$250, 10/04/16, North Carolina Democratic Party; \$250, 08/11/18, Act Blue; \$100, 08/11/18, Kathy Manning for Congress; \$250, 09/28/18, Kathy Manning for Congress; Lynne Klauer: None, N/A, N/A.
7. Sisters and Spouses: None, N/A, N/A.

Alina L. Romanowski, of Illinois, a Career Member of the Senior Executive Service, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the State of Kuwait.

Nominee: Alina L. Romanowski.
Post: Kuwait.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: 0.
2. Spouse: 0.
3. Children and Spouses: Nicholas R. Matzelevich: 0, Eric R. Matzelevich: 0.
4. Parents: Deceased.
5. Grandparents: Deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: None.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Dominique S. Romanowski: 0, Paolo Consiglio: 0.

Kelly C. Degnan, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Georgia.

Nominee: Kelly Colleen Degnan.
Post: Georgia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: No contributions.
2. Spouse: N/A—no spouse.
3. Children and Spouses: N/A—no children.
4. Parents: Kathryn Colleen Morrison—deceased; Richard Patrick Degnan—deceased.
5. Grandparents: Michael and Mathilda Degnan—deceased; David and Kathryn Morrison—deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: N/A—no brothers.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Kate Degnan—no spouse; No contributions; Kim Degnan—no spouse; No contributions.

Peter M. Haymond, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Nominee: Peter M. Haymond.
Post: Lao People's Democratic Republic.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee.

1. Self: none.
2. Spouse: none.
3. Children and Spouses: Faye Donaya Haymond, Single, none.
4. Parents: Phillip M. Haymond—deceased; Carole Marie Haymond—deceased.
5. Grandparents: Paul M. Haymond—deceased; Faye Averett Haymond Madsen—deceased; Roy C. Cummings—deceased; Ethel Cummings—deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: Alan David Haymond, none; Pamela Haymond, none; Andrew Cummings Haymond, none; Colleen Haymond, none; Jonathan Ruel Haymond, none; Tresa Haymond, none.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Elizabeth Allen, none; Spencer Allen, none; Martha Dobler, none; Andreas Dobler, none; Rebekah McKnight, divorced, none; Esther Gozo, divorced, none.

John Joseph Sullivan, of Maryland, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Russian Federation.

Nominee: John J. Sullivan.
Post: U.S. Ambassador to Russia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$250.00, 2016, Trump-Pence 2016 Presidential Campaign; \$5,000.00, 2015, Right to Rise USA (Jeb Bush Presidential Campaign).
2. Spouse: Graciela M. Rodriguez: None.
3. Children and Spouses: John H. Sullivan: None, Katherine A. Sullivan: None, Edward A. Sullivan: None.
4. Parents: John H. Sullivan—deceased: None, Julia C. Sullivan—deceased: None.
5. Grandparents: Joseph W. Sullivan—deceased: None, Sabrina F. Sullivan—deceased: None, Patrick J. Clark—deceased: None, Bridget K. Clark—deceased: None.
6. Brothers and Spouses: None.
7. Sisters and Spouses: None.

Andeliz N. Castillo, of New York, to be United States Alternate Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

Alma L. Golden, of Texas, to be Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, for the Committee on Foreign Relations I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Foreign Service nominations beginning with Derrick Scott Brown and ending with V. Kate Somvongsiri, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 10, 2019. (minus 1 nominee: Idris M. Diaz)

Foreign Service nomination of Jay P. Williams.

By Mr. BARRASSO for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Sean O'Donnell, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Environmental Protection Agency.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. SMITH (for herself and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 2902. A bill to enhance the rural health workforce, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. HARRIS, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2903. A bill to require the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, to develop financial risk analyses relating to climate change, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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

S. 2904. A bill to direct the Director of the National Science Foundation to support research on the outputs that may be generated by generative adversarial networks, otherwise known as deepfakes, and other comparable techniques that may be developed in

the future, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2905. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the occurrence of diabetes in Medicare beneficiaries by extending coverage under Medicare for medical nutrition therapy services to such beneficiaries with pre-diabetes or with risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2906. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of the Interior from issuing new oil or natural gas production leases in the Gulf of Mexico under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to a person that does not renegotiate its existing leases in order to require royalty payments if oil and natural gas prices are greater than or equal to specified price thresholds, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2907. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of medical nutrition therapy services for individuals with eating disorders under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2908. A bill to prohibit air carriers from imposing fees that are not reasonable and proportional to the costs incurred by the air carriers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH):

S. 2909. A bill to extend the authority of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to enter into leases of non-excess property of the Administration; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2910. A bill to establish aviation accession training programs for the Commissioned Officer Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to prepare students for commissioned service as pilots in the Corps, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. MENEDEZ):

S. 2911. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide a monthly out-of-pocket cost sharing maximum for enrollees who incur a significant portion of costs for covered part D drugs towards the annual out-of-pocket threshold during a month; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 2912. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take certain land located in Pinal County, Arizona, into trust for the benefit of the Gila River Indian Community, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2913. A bill to apply cooperative and small employer charity pension plan rules to certain charitable employers whose primary exempt purpose is providing services with respect to mothers and children; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 2914. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure access to

acupuncturist services through the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. MCSALLY):

S. 2915. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to improve the provision of services and benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans who experience domestic violence, intimate partner violence, or sexual assault, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2916. A bill to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Mr. CRAMER):

S. 2917. A bill to amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 2918. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Transportation to establish a program to provide grants to carry out activities to benefit pollinators on roadsides and highway rights-of-way, including the planting and seeding of native, locally-appropriate grasses and wildflowers, including milkweed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:

S. 2919. A bill to require the Federal financial regulators to issue guidance encouraging financial institutions to work with consumers and businesses affected by a Federal Government shutdown, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2920. A bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. KENNEDY:

S. 2921. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for an auction of C-Band spectrum, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2922. A bill to permit Amtrak to bring civil actions in Federal district court to enforce the right set forth in section 24308(c) of title 49, United States Code, which gives intercity and commuter rail passenger transportation preference over freight transportation in using a rail line, junction, or crossing; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. MENEDEZ, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. REED):

S. Res. 435. A resolution reaffirming the importance of the General Security of Military Information Agreement between the Republic of Korea and Japan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 133

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 133, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States merchant mariners of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

S. 191

At the request of Ms. MCSALLY, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 191, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to include in periodic health assessments, separation history and physical examinations, and other assessments an evaluation of whether a member of the Armed Forces has been exposed to open burn pits or toxic airborne chemicals, and for other purposes.

S. 286

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 286, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 296

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 296, a bill to amend XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 457

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 457, a bill to require that \$1 coins issued during 2019 honor President George H.W. Bush and to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to issue bullion coins during 2019 in honor of Barbara Bush.

S. 505

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 505, a bill to ensure due process protections of individuals in the United States against unlawful detention based solely on a protected characteristic.

S. 610

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 610, a bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration.

S. 877

At the request of Mr. BROWN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 877, a bill to prohibit the sale of shark fins, and for other purposes.

S. 1032

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Vermont

(Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1032, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of income for purposes of determining the tax-exempt status of certain corporations.

S. 1089

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1089, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the amendments made by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act which disqualify expenses for over-the-counter drugs under health savings accounts and health flexible spending arrangements.

S. 1309

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1309, a bill to identify and combat corruption in countries, to establish a tiered system of countries with respect to levels of corruption by their governments and their efforts to combat such corruption, and to assess United States assistance to designated countries in order to advance anti-corruption efforts in those countries and better serve United States taxpayers.

S. 1399

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1399, a bill to amend title VIII of the Public Health Services Act to revise and extend nursing workforce development programs.

S. 1554

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1554, a bill to provide for an automatic acquisition of United States citizenship for certain internationally adopted individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 1575

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1575, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to make available to the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention copies of consular reports of death of United States citizens, and for other purposes.

S. 1757

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) 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. 1820

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1820, a bill to improve

the integrity and safety of horseracing by requiring a uniform anti-doping and medication control program to be developed and enforced by an independent Horseracing Anti-Doping and Medication Control Authority.

S. 1838

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1838, a bill to amend the Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 1838, supra.

S. 1908

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

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1908, supra.

S. 1992

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) were added as cosponsors of S. 1992, a bill to amend the FAST Act to repeal a rescission of funds.

S. 2080

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

S. 2218

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2218, a bill to amend title IV of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to restore Medicaid coverage for citizens of the Freely Associated States lawfully residing in the United States under the Compacts of Free Association between the Government of the United States and the Governments of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

S. 2365

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2365, a bill to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to authorize urban Indian organizations to enter

into arrangements for the sharing of medical services and facilities, and for other purposes.

S. 2377

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor 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. 2539

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

S. 2546

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2546, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to require a group health plan or health insurance coverage offered in connection with such a plan to provide an exceptions process for any medication step therapy protocol, and for other purposes.

S. 2561

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2561, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, to further the conservation of certain wildlife species, and for other purposes.

S. 2648

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2648, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the benchmarking process for the Medicare Shared Savings Program.

S. 2674

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2674, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to establish a grant program for improving infrastructure asset management by small public water systems, and for other purposes.

S. 2680

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY) 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. 2699

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2699, a bill to reauthorize the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act of 2009, and for other purposes.

S. 2733

At the request of Mr. ROMNEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2733, a bill to save and strengthen critical social contract programs of the Federal Government.

S. 2745

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) 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. 2766

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2766, a bill to support and expand civic engagement and political leadership of adolescent girls around the world, and other purposes.

S. 2788

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 2826

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2826, a bill to require a global economic security strategy, and for other purposes.

S. 2835

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2835, a bill to include information regarding VA home loans in the Informed Consumer Choice Disclosure required to be provided to a prospective FHA borrower who is a veteran, to amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize the provision of a certificate of eligibility for VA home loans during the prepreparation counseling for members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

S. 2870

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2870, a bill to limit the use of solitary confinement and other forms of restrictive housing in immigration detention, and for other purposes.

S. 2874

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2874, a bill to terminate certain waivers of sanctions with respect to Iran issued in connection with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and for other purposes.

S. 2898

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr.

WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2898, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for a full annuity supplement for certain air traffic controllers.

S. RES. 98

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor 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.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2913. A bill to apply cooperative and small employer charity pension plan rules to certain charitable employers whose primary exempt purpose is providing services with respect to mothers and children; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Protecting Critical Services for Mothers and Babies Act, with my colleague Senator PERDUE. Enacting this bill will help ensure that mothers and infants across the country continue to receive access to important health programs.

About 700 women die each year in the United States from complications during or after pregnancy, a problem that disproportionately affects Black and American Indian/Alaskan Native women. In the face of these challenges, organizations like March of Dimes provide services that disseminate health information to pregnant women and mothers and support care for premature and ill infants.

Inflexible funding rules and historically low interest rates have combined to result in a sharp increase in March of Dimes' pension funding obligations next year. This Act will extend more flexible rules to organizations that have a long track record of serving maternal and infant health needs. These rules, already offered to other organizations, will continue to protect plan participants while also smoothing out pension funding obligations. This change will ensure that resources are not diverted away from important maternal and infant health programs.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2916. A bill to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleague, the senior Senator from Vermont, in introducing the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act. This bill

would update and reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs, which have provided life-saving services and housing for America's homeless youth for more than forty years.

Homelessness is affecting youth in unprecedented numbers. According to a recent study by Voices of Youth Count, an estimated 4.2 million young people experience homelessness at some point each year. Some of these youth may stay away from home for a few nights, while others have been living on the streets for years. Approximately 73 percent experienced homelessness lasting more than one month. The study also found that homelessness is just as prevalent in rural communities as it is in urban communities.

And sadly, these statistics likely underestimate the scale of this problem. This month, I met with teachers and specialists from Lewiston, Maine, who work directly with young people in Lewiston High School whose families experience homelessness. We talked about the pressures that student homelessness places on teachers, school administrators, and their already strapped resources, and, of course, on the children and teens themselves. Although schools often serve as a first stop for assistance, the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act would reauthorize and strengthen the programs that help homeless youth meet their immediate needs, and it would help secure long-term residential services for those who cannot be reunified with their families safely.

The three Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs—the Basic Center Program, the Street Outreach Program, and the Transitional Living Program—help community-based organizations reach these young people when they need support the most. These programs help runaway and homeless youth avoid the juvenile justice system, and early intervention can help them to escape victimization and trafficking.

As Chairman of the Senate Housing Appropriations Subcommittee, working to end the scourge of homelessness—among both youth and adults—has been one of my top priorities. Along with Senator JACK REED, I created a grant program to reduce youth homelessness. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, there has been a 15 percent drop in chronic homelessness since 2007. We must build on this success. Homeless youth should have the same opportunities to succeed as their peers, and this bill is an important step in that direction.

In Maine, our homeless shelters are critical partners in the fight to end human trafficking. Earlier this year, I hosted U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson in Lewiston. We visited New Beginnings, where we saw firsthand how Runaway and Homeless Youth Act resources are

providing essential safety nets for young people in need. Staff at New Beginnings help young people with case management, find referrals to local and State agencies, assist with housing needs and access to shelter, and connect them to local educational and employment programs.

These programs produce results. In 2015, I held a hearing during which Brittany Dixon, a former homeless youth from Auburn, Maine, testified about her personal experience with New Beginnings. After becoming homeless as a teenager, New Beginnings gave her the help and support she needed to develop critical life skills and become self-sufficient. She went on to earn a college degree and obtain a full-time job as an education technician at an elementary school.

Mr. President, teens run away and become homeless for many reasons. They are also at high risk of victimization, abuse, criminal activity, and even death. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children estimates that, in 2017, one in seven of nearly 25,000 youth reported to them as runaways were sex trafficking victims. In Maine, recent reports show that of the more than 10,000 reported human trafficking cases last year, 26 percent involved minors. Several hundreds of these victims identified as runaway or homeless youth. This population is at greater risk of suicide, unintended pregnancy, and substance abuse. Many are unable to continue with school and are more likely to enter our juvenile justice system.

Our bill focuses on this tragic problem by supporting wrap-around services for victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. Congress has passed legislation in recent years to combat these horrific crimes and support survivors, and the policies and tools included in the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act are important pieces of the Federal response to human trafficking.

The data also show that a growing number of homeless youth identify as LGBT. According to the Voices of Youth Count report, LGBT young people are twice as likely to be homeless. Our bill would ensure that those seeking services through these Federal programs are not denied assistance based on their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

Mr. President, the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act will support those young people who run away, are kicked out, or are disconnected from families. A caring and safe place to sleep, eat, grow, study, and develop is critical for all young people. The programs reauthorized through this legislation help extend those basic services to the most vulnerable youth in our communities.

I thank Senator LEAHY for his leadership on this bill and urge my colleagues to support it.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2922. A bill to permit Amtrak to bring civil actions in Federal district court to enforce the right set forth in section 24308(c) of title 49, United States Code, which gives intercity and commuter rail passenger transportation preference over freight transportation in using a rail line, junction, or crossing; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2922

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Rail Passenger Fairness Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

(1) Congress created Amtrak under the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (Public Law 91–158).

(2) Amtrak began serving customers on May 1, 1971, taking over the operation of most intercity passenger trains that private, freight railroads were previously required to operate. In exchange for assuming these passenger rail operations, Amtrak was given access to the national rail network.

(3) In return for relief from the obligation to provide intercity passenger service, railroads over which Amtrak operated (referred to in this section as “host railroads”) were expected to give Amtrak passenger trains preference over freight trains when using the national rail network.

(4) In 1973, Congress passed the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973 (Public Law 93–146), which gives intercity and commuter rail passenger transportation preference over freight transportation in using a rail line, junction, or crossing. This right, which is now codified as section 24308(c) of title 49, United States Code, states, “Except in an emergency, intercity and commuter rail passenger transportation provided by or for Amtrak has preference over freight transportation in using a rail line, junction, or crossing unless the Board orders otherwise under this subsection. A rail carrier affected by this subsection may apply to the Board for relief. If the Board, after an opportunity for a hearing under section 553 of title 5, decides that preference for intercity and commuter rail passenger transportation materially will lessen the quality of freight transportation provided to shippers, the Board shall establish the rights of the carrier and Amtrak on reasonable terms.”

(5) Many host railroads have ignored the law referred to in paragraph (4) by refusing to give passenger rail the priority to which it is statutorily entitled and giving freight transportation the higher priority. As a result, Amtrak’s on time performance on most host railroads is poor, has declined between 2014 through 2019, and continues to decline.

(6) According to Amtrak, 6,500,000 customers on State-supported and long-distance trains arrived at their destination late during fiscal year 2019. Nearly 70 percent of these delays were caused by host railroads, amounting to a total of 3,200,000 minutes. The largest cause of these delays was freight train interference, which accounted for more than 1,000,000 minutes of delay for Amtrak passengers, or approximately 2 years, because host railroads chose to give freight trains priority.

(7) Poor on-time performance wastes taxpayer dollars. According to a 2019 report by

Amtrak’s Office of Inspector General, a 5 percent improvement of on-time performance on all Amtrak routes would result in \$12,100,000 in cost savings to Amtrak in the first year. If on-time performance on long-distance routes reached 75 percent for a year, Amtrak would realize an estimated \$41,900,000 in operating cost savings, with a one-time savings of \$336,000,000 due to a reduction in equipment replacement needs.

(8) Historical data suggests that on-time performance on host railroads is driven by the existence of an effective means to enforce Amtrak’s preference rights:

(A) Two months after the date of the enactment of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (division B of Public Law 110–432), which included provisions for the enforcement of these preference rights, was enacted, the on-time performance of long-distance trains improved from 56 percent to 77 percent and Class I freight train interference delays across all routes declined by 40 percent.

(B) One year after such date of enactment, freight train interference delays had declined by 54 percent and the on-time performance of long-distance trains reached 85 percent.

(C) In 2014, after some of the provisions in the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 related to enforcement of preference were ruled unconstitutional by a D.C. Circuit Court, long-distance train on-time performance declined from 72 percent to 50 percent, and freight train interference delays increased 59 percent.

(D) The last time long-distance trains achieved an on-time rate of more than 80 percent in a given month was February 2012.

(9) As a result of violations of Amtrak’s right to preference, Amtrak has been consistently unable on host railroad networks to meet its congressionally mandated mission and goals, which are codified in section 24101 of title 49, United States Code (relating to providing on-time and trip-time competitive service to its passengers).

(10) Amtrak does not have an effective mechanism to enforce its statutory preference right in order to fulfill its mission and goals. Only the Attorney General can bring a civil action for equitable relief in a district court of the United States to enforce Amtrak’s preference rights.

(11) In Amtrak’s entire history, the only enforcement action initiated by the Attorney General was against the Southern Pacific Transportation Company in 1979.

(12) Congress supports continued authority for the Attorney General to initiate an action, but Amtrak should also be entitled to bring a civil action before a Federal district court to enforce its statutory preference rights.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZE AMTRAK TO BRING A CIVIL ACTION TO ENFORCE IT PREFERENCE RIGHTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 24308(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended, by adding at the end the following: “Notwithstanding sections 24103(a) and 24308(f), Amtrak shall have the right to bring an action for equitable or other relief in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, or in any jurisdiction in which Amtrak resides or is found, to enforce the preference rights granted under this subsection.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 24103(a)(1) of title 49, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “of this subsection” and inserting “and subsection 24308(c)”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 435—RE-AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GENERAL SECURITY OF MILITARY INFORMATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND JAPAN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. REED) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 435

Whereas the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) between the Republic of Korea and Japan is crucial to safeguarding United States and allied interests in Northeast Asia and the broader Indo-Pacific region;

Whereas bilateral information sharing between the Governments of the Republic of Korea and Japan is critical to increasing trust and growing cooperation that advances shared defense and security interests;

Whereas the Governments and people of Japan and the Republic of Korea have made significant contributions to advancing our shared defense partnership and promoting trilateral cooperation;

Whereas defense cooperation among the United States, Japan, and the Republic of Korea serves as a deterrent against aggression from adversaries and external security threats as well as against new and non-traditional challenges;

Whereas the suspension of GSOMIA directly harms United States national security at a time when the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is engaging in an increased level of provocations, including 12 tests of over 20 ballistic missiles this year, including new types of nuclear-capable land and sea-launched ballistic missiles;

Whereas the Governments of the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation are seeking to capitalize on friction between the Republic of Korea and Japan, and the resulting strain on trilateral cooperation and on our bilateral alliances;

Whereas the Government and people of the United States value the partnership of Japan and the Republic of Korea in upholding regional security and prosperity, including by safeguarding maritime security and freedom of navigation, promoting investment and commerce, advocating for the rule of law, and opposing the use of intimidation and force in the Indo-Pacific; and

Whereas strengthening intelligence sharing is fundamental to the future of trilateral cooperation, and to enabling the Governments of the United States, Japan, and the Republic of Korea to face the challenges posed by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's destabilizing actions, the People's Republic of China, and other emerging security threats: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the importance of the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) between the Republic of Korea and Japan as a crucial military intelligence-sharing agreement foundational to Indo-Pacific security and defense, and specifically to countering nuclear and missile threats from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

(2) underscores the vital role of the alliances between the United States and Japan and the United States and the Republic of Korea in promoting peace, stability, and security in the Indo-Pacific region;

(3) highlights that friction between the Republic of Korea and Japan only fractures the region and empowers its agitators;

(4) urges the Republic of Korea to consider how to best address potential measures that may undermine regional security cooperation;

(5) encourages the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea to take steps to rebuild trust and address the sources of bilateral friction, insulate important defense and security ties from other bilateral challenges, and pursue cooperation on shared interests, such as a denuclearized Korean peninsula, market-based trade and commerce, and a stable Indo-Pacific region; and

(6) commits to strengthening and deepening diplomatic, economic, security, and people-to-people ties between and among the United States, Japan, and the Republic of Korea.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1249. Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. JONES, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3055, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1250. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3055, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1249. Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. JONES, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3055, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 14, after line 15, insert the following:

SEC. 1603. BIPARTISAN AMERICAN MINERS ACT OF 2019.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Bipartisan American Miners Act of 2019”.

(b) **TRANSFERS TO 1974 UMWA PENSION PLAN.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subsection (i) of section 402 of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1232) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (3)(A), by striking “\$490,000,000” and inserting “\$750,000,000”;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) **ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.**—

“(A) **CALCULATION.**—If the dollar limitation specified in paragraph (3)(A) exceeds the aggregate amount required to be transferred under paragraphs (1) and (2) for a fiscal year, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer an additional amount equal to the difference between such dollar limitation and such aggregate amount to the trustees of the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan to pay benefits required under that plan.

“(B) **CESSATION OF TRANSFERS.**—The transfers described in subparagraph (A) shall

cease as of the first fiscal year beginning after the first plan year for which the funded percentage (as defined in section 432(j)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) of the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan is at least 100 percent.

“(C) **PROHIBITION ON BENEFIT INCREASES, ETC.**—During a fiscal year in which the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan is receiving transfers under subparagraph (A), no amendment of such plan which increases the liabilities of the plan by reason of any increase in benefits, any change in the accrual of benefits, or any change in the rate at which benefits become nonforfeitable under the plan may be adopted unless the amendment is required as a condition of qualification under part I of subchapter D of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(D) **CRITICAL STATUS TO BE MAINTAINED.**—Until such time as the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan ceases to be eligible for the transfers described in subparagraph (A)—

“(i) the Plan shall be treated as if it were in critical status for purposes of sections 412(b)(3), 432(e)(3), and 4971(g)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and sections 302(b)(3) and 305(e)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act;

“(ii) the Plan shall maintain and comply with its rehabilitation plan under section 432(e) of such Code and section 305(e) of such Act, including any updates thereto; and

“(iii) the provisions of subsections (c) and (d) of section 432 of such Code and subsections (c) and (d) of section 305 of such Act shall not apply.

“(E) **TREATMENT OF TRANSFERS FOR PURPOSES OF WITHDRAWAL LIABILITY UNDER ERISA.**—The amount of any transfer made under subparagraph (A) (and any earnings attributable thereto) shall be disregarded in determining the unfunded vested benefits of the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan and the allocation of such unfunded vested benefits to an employer for purposes of determining the employer's withdrawal liability under section 4201 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974.

“(F) **REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN CONTRIBUTION RATE.**—A transfer under subparagraph (A) shall not be made for a fiscal year unless the persons that are obligated to contribute to the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan on the date of the transfer are obligated to make the contributions at rates that are no less than those in effect on the date which is 30 days before the date of enactment of the Bipartisan American Miners Act of 2019.

“(G) **ENHANCED ANNUAL REPORTING.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than the 90th day of each plan year beginning after the date of enactment of the Bipartisan American Miners Act of 2019, the trustees of the 1974 UMWA Pension Plan shall file with the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation a report (including appropriate documentation and actuarial certifications from the plan actuary, as required by the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate) that contains—

“(I) whether the plan is in endangered or critical status under section 305 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 432 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as of the first day of such plan year;

“(II) the funded percentage (as defined in section 432(j)(2) of such Code) as of the first day of such plan year, and the underlying actuarial value of assets and liabilities taken into account in determining such percentage;

“(III) the market value of the assets of the plan as of the last day of the plan year preceding such plan year;

“(IV) the total value of all contributions made during the plan year preceding such plan year;

“(V) the total value of all benefits paid during the plan year preceding such plan year;

“(VI) cash flow projections for such plan year and either the 6 or 10 succeeding plan years, at the election of the trustees, and the assumptions relied upon in making such projections;

“(VII) funding standard account projections for such plan year and the 9 succeeding plan years, and the assumptions relied upon in making such projections;

“(VIII) the total value of all investment gains or losses during the plan year preceding such plan year;

“(IX) any significant reduction in the number of active participants during the plan year preceding such plan year, and the reason for such reduction;

“(X) a list of employers that withdrew from the plan in the plan year preceding such plan year, and the resulting reduction in contributions;

“(XI) a list of employers that paid withdrawal liability to the plan during the plan year preceding such plan year and, for each employer, a total assessment of the withdrawal liability paid, the annual payment amount, and the number of years remaining in the payment schedule with respect to such withdrawal liability;

“(XII) any material changes to benefits, accrual rates, or contribution rates during the plan year preceding such plan year;

“(XIII) any scheduled benefit increase or decrease in the plan year preceding such plan year having a material effect on liabilities of the plan;

“(XIV) details regarding any funding improvement plan or rehabilitation plan and updates to such plan;

“(XV) the number of participants and beneficiaries during the plan year preceding such plan year who are active participants, the number of participants and beneficiaries in pay status, and the number of terminated vested participants and beneficiaries;

“(XVI) the information contained on the most recent annual funding notice submitted by the plan under section 101(f) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974;

“(XVII) the information contained on the most recent Department of Labor Form 5500 of the plan; and

“(XVIII) copies of the plan document and amendments, other retirement benefit or ancillary benefit plans relating to the plan and contribution obligations under such plans, a breakdown of administrative expenses of the plan, participant census data and distribution of benefits, the most recent actuarial valuation report as of the plan year, copies of collective bargaining agreements, and financial reports, and such other information as the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor and the Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, may require.

“(ii) ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION.—The report required under clause (i) shall be submitted electronically.

“(iii) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate shall share the information in the report under clause (i) with the Secretary of Labor.

“(iv) PENALTY.—Any failure to file the report required under clause (i) on or before the date described in such clause shall be treated as a failure to file a report required to be filed under section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, except that section 6652(e) of such Code shall be applied with re-

spect to any such failure by substituting “\$100” for “\$25”. The preceding sentence shall not apply if the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary's delegate determines that reasonable diligence has been exercised by the trustees of such plan in attempting to timely file such report.

“(H) 1974 UMWA PENSION PLAN DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘1974 UMWA Pension Plan’ has the meaning given the term in section 9701(a)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, but without regard to the limitation on participation to individuals who retired in 1976 and thereafter.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to fiscal years beginning after September 30, 2016.

(B) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 402(i)(4)(G) of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1232(i)(4)(G)), as added by this subsection, shall apply to plan years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(C) INCLUSION IN MULTIEMPLOYER HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN.—Section 402(h)(2)(C) of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1232(h)(2)(C)) is amended—

(1) by striking “the Health Benefits for Miners Act of 2017” both places it appears in clause (ii) and inserting “the Bipartisan American Miners Act of 2019”;

(2) by striking “, would be denied or reduced as a result of a bankruptcy proceeding commenced in 2012 or 2015” in clause (ii)(II) and inserting “or a related coal wage agreement, would be denied or reduced as a result of a bankruptcy proceeding commenced in 2012, 2015, 2018, or 2019”;

(3) by striking “and” at the end of clause (ii)(I), by striking the period at the end of clause (ii)(II) and inserting “; and”, and by inserting after clause (ii)(II) the following new subclause:

“(III) the cost of administering the resolution of disputes process administered (as of the date of the enactment of the Bipartisan American Miners Act of 2019) by the Trustees of the Plan.”.

(4) by striking “January 1, 2017” in clause (ii) and inserting “January 1, 2019”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(vi) RELATED COAL WAGE AGREEMENT.—For purposes of clause (ii), the term ‘related coal wage agreement’ means an agreement between the United Mine Workers of America and an employer in the bituminous coal industry that—

“(I) is a signatory operator; or

“(II) is or was a debtor in a bankruptcy proceeding that was consolidated, administratively or otherwise, with the bankruptcy proceeding of a signatory operator or a related person to a signatory operator (as those terms are defined in section 9701(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986).”.

(d) REDUCTION IN MINIMUM AGE FOR ALLOWABLE IN-SERVICE DISTRIBUTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 401(a)(36) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “age 62” and inserting “age 59½”.

(2) APPLICATION TO GOVERNMENTAL SECTION 457(b) PLANS.—Clause (i) of section 457(d)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting “(in the case of a plan maintained by an employer described in subsection (e)(1)(A), age 59½)” before the comma at the end.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2019.

SA 1250. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3055, making ap-

propriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, add the following:

SEC. ____ . REDUCTION IN RATE FOR OPERATIONS.

The Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020 (division A of Public Law 116-59) is further amended by inserting after section 150, as added by section 101 of this division, the following:

“SEC. 151. REDUCTION IN CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS TO PROVIDE SAVINGS FOR THE HIGHWAY TRUST FUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY INFRASTRUCTURE ASSISTANCE.

“(a) REDUCTION IN CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the rate for operations provided by section 101 is hereby reduced by 1 percent.

“(2) EXCEPTIONS.—The rate for operations shall not be reduced under paragraph (1) for the following:

“(A) Amounts made available from the Highway Trust Fund established by section 9503(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(B) Amounts for purposes described in section 147.

“(C) For the Environmental Protection Agency, Infrastructure Assistance, amounts made available for the following:

“(i) The Clean Water State Revolving Funds and the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds.

“(ii) The Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act Program Account.

“(iii) The America's Water Infrastructure Act Grant Programs under section 1459A of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j-19a).

“(b) TRANSFER OF SAVINGS.—

“(1) DETERMINATION OF SAVINGS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall determine the amount of the reduction in amounts made available under section 101 of this division that is attributable to subsection (a).

“(2) TRANSFER.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the General Fund of the Treasury an amount equal to the amount determined under paragraph (1), as follows:

“(A) For the Highway Trust Fund established by section 9503(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 95 percent of such amount.

“(B) For the Clean Water State Revolving Funds and the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, 3 percent of such amount.

“(C) For the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act Program Account, 1 percent of such amount.

“(D) For the America's Water Infrastructure Act Grant Programs under section 1459A of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j-19a), 1 percent of such amount.

“(3) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts transferred under paragraph (2) shall remain available until expended.”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have 13 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing the following nominations: Mitchell A. Silk, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, Brian D. Montgomery, of Texas, to be Deputy Secretary, and David Carey Woll, Jr., of Connecticut, and John Bobbitt, of Texas, both to be an Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Peter J. Coniglio, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Export-Import.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

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 20, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the nominations of Sean O'Donnell, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Environmental Protection Agency.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the nomination of Stephen E. Biegun, of Michigan, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the nomination of Stephen Hahn, of Texas, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY

The Subcommittee on Cybersecurity of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

The Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

The Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

The Subcommittee on Health Care of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MULTILATERAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS, AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The Subcommittee on Multilateral International Development, Multilat-

eral Institutions, and International Economic, Energy, and Environmental Policy of the Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2920

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2920) to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, and for other purposes.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. PERDUE. 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 6:20 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, November 21, 2019, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 20, 2019:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ADRIAN ZUCKERMAN, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO ROMANIA.

THE JUDICIARY

BARBARA LAGO, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT.