The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER
The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another year.

We ask Your blessing upon the Members of this people’s House as they reconvene for the Second Session of the 116th Congress. May they anticipate the opportunities and difficulties that are before them, and before so many Americans, with steadfast determination to work together toward solutions that will benefit their countrymen.

Grant that they be worthy of the responsibilities they have been given by their constituents and truly be the people You have called them to be. May the walls of disagreement that have divided this assembly be put aside and replaced by a spirit of respect and dignity and, where needed, cooperation.

May Your spirit, O God, be in all of our hearts and minds and encourage us to do the works of peace and justice, now and always.

May all that we do be done for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE
The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Hon. Nancy Pelosi,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to House of Representatives Rule X, Clause 5(b)(1), I am writing to inform you that Representative Jefferson Van Drew has resigned as a Member of the House Democratic Caucus.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Johnson.
Chairman, House Democratic Caucus.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR OF HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS
The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Chair of the House Democratic Caucus:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Hon. Nancy Pelosi,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to House of Representatives Rule X, Clause 5(b)(1), I am writing to inform you that Representative Jefferson Van Drew has resigned as a Member of the House Democratic Caucus.

Sincerely,

Hakeem Jeffries,
Chairman, House Democratic Caucus.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

Hon. Collin C. Peterson,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN PETERTSON: This letter is to advise you that Representative Jefferson Van Drew’s election to the Committee on Natural Resources has been automatically vacated pursuant to clause 5(b) of rule X effective today.

Best regards,

Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House.
The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CUÉLLAR). On this roll call, 384 Members have recorded their presence. A quorum is present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the proceedings of January 3, 2020, and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOYER) and

Ms. SCANLON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report:

PROVIDING FOR A COMMITTEE TO NOTIFY RE ASSEMBLY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I send to the House the report of the Committee on Rules that House Resolution 776 shall supplant House Resolution 10.

Resolved, That the Clerk of the House inform the Senate that a quorum of the House of Representatives has assembled and that the House is ready to proceed with business.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 776

Regarding the time required for debate, which was not otherwise ordered, the hour of daily meeting of the House shall be 2 p.m. on Mondays; noon on Wednesdays and Thursdays; and 9 a.m. on all other days of the week. The resolution was agreed to. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 776

Resolved, That unless otherwise ordered, the House shall come to order and adjourn at the time of the adjournment. Pursuant to rule I, the Chair of the Committee on Rules, or the Clerk, shall name a time for further proceedings.

Resolved, That unless otherwise ordered, the House shall come to order and adjourn at the time of the adjournment. Pursuant to rule I, the Chair of the Committee on Rules, or the Clerk, shall name a time for further proceedings.

TO INFORM THE SENATE THAT A QUORUM OF THE HOUSE HAS ASSEMBLED

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I send to the Clerk of the House a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 777

Resolved, That the Clerk of the House inform the Senate that a quorum of the House of Representatives has assembled.

Resolved, That the Clerk of the House inform the Senate that a quorum of the House of Representatives has assembled.

Providing for the hour of meeting of the House

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I send to the Clerk of the House a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 778

Resolved, That unless otherwise ordered, the hour of daily meeting of the House shall be 2 p.m. on Mondays; noon on Wednesdays and Thursdays; and 9 a.m. on all other days of the week.

Resolved, That unless otherwise ordered, the hour of daily meeting of the House shall be 2 p.m. on Mondays; noon on Wednesdays and Thursdays; and 9 a.m. on all other days of the week.

The resolution was agreed to. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.
(Rept. No. 116-366) on the resolution (H. Res. 779) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 535) to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to designate per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2895

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Congressman Mo Brooks be removed as a cosponsor from H.R. 2895, the Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Neguse). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois? There was no objection.

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

HON. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

Dear Majority Speaker: I write to inform you of my resignation, effective close of business on January 13, 2020, as United States Representative for the 50th District of California. Attached is a copy of the letter I submitted to the Governor of California.

Since the day I joined the Marines in the aftermath of 9/11, I have had the honor of serving my country, both at home and abroad. After three tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, I was elected to the House and brought with me the lessons I learned during my service in the Marine Corps and the values instilled by my father who held this seat before me. Growing up in East County San Diego, I learned from an early age the importance of prefetching, the value of patriotism, and what a strong and secure border can bring to a community.

During my time in Congress, I had the privilege of helping thousands of individuals in my district—from making sure veterans received the benefits they earned, to helping Social Security and Medicare recipients cut through red tape, assisting immigrants seeking legal citizenship, and countless others going up against the IRS, ATF or other government agencies.

I also sought to enact policies that will make our country better off. As Chairman of the Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, I worked to enhance student outcomes and empower parents with greater choice in where they send their children to school. I was also a strong advocate for college transparency and introduced the Student Right to Know Before You Go Act, which would give parents and students a better understanding of college costs and possible outcomes.

As Chairman of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee, I worked to protect the Jones Act and ensure that our country has a strong maritime industrial base, including a skilled pool of American shipyard workers and mariners that would form the backbone of our re-
CONGRESS NEEDS TO PASS WAR POWERS RESOLUTION IMMEDIATELY

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, the American people and Members of Congress cannot ignore being on the brink of war. Nor can we ignore the fact that the Constitution indicates in Article I that it is the Congress that has the responsibility and duty to declare war.

Nor can we ignore the breaking news of 10 rockets that have just hit a base in Iraq that houses U.S. troops or the 4,000 troops that have been sent in the last 24 hours or the reckless decision made by this administration to kill a very bad man in a manner that has created havoc in the Mideast.

It is interesting to suggest that our allies are supportive when, in the last 24 hours, Israel said they had nothing to do with it. Presidents Obama and Bush, competent and prepared, indicated that this was not the right thing to do.

My concern is that we, as a Nation, are defenders, and we can defend ourselves. We are powerful. That is not the point.

The point is that we can do a tactic, but where is the strategy? It is crucial that we do not send young men and women into battle recklessly.

I believe the Congress needs to pass a war powers resolution, an AUMF, immediately.

PRESIDENT TRUMP’S ORDER WAS CORRECT

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, universally respected Senator Joe Lieberman provided an extraordinary op-ed in The Wall Street Journal: “President Trump’s order to take out Qasem Soleimani was morally, constitutionally, and strategically correct. No American can dispute that Soleimani created, supported, and directed a network of terrorist organizations that spread havoc in the Middle East.” In Syria, “more than 500,000 Syrians have died.”

“During the Iraq war, Soleimani oversaw three camps in Iran.” These trained fighters have killed more than 600 American troops.

The claim that President Trump “had no authority to order that attack without constitutional approval is constitutionally untenable and practically senseless. Authority to act quickly to eliminate a threat to the U.S. is inherent.”... Democrats should leave partisan politics at ‘the water’s edge’ and... stand together against Iran and dangerous leaders like Qasem Soleimani.”

Senator Joe Lieberman tells the truth.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism, with the courage and leadership of President Donald Trump.

PRESIDENT TRUMP VISITS OHIO

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, this week, President Trump will travel to the great and compassionate city of Toledo, Ohio, my lifelong home. Like all people, the President is welcome in Toledo.

Toledo is a city of industry, where the mighty Jeep has rolled off the assembly line every year since 1941. We are also the city that embraces the future and launched America’s leading solar energy company, First Solar. Our diverse city and people truly make America great.

I urge the President to bring a message of unity to our city, not one of division.

I also urge President Trump to keep his promises to our people: Make medicine and healthcare more affordable; save our Great Lakes; negotiate enforceable trade agreements that actually stop job outsourcing; Protect, don’t gut, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Get MITCH MCCONNELL to pass the Butch Lewis Act to save the pensions of 60,000 Ohioans, and select our 180th Fighter Wing for the F–35 tranche planes that they have so duly earned.

Let us work on a bipartisan basis to improve the lives of all people. And, in furtherance of that, this Thursday, I urge all Toledo area religious leaders to offer prayers for nonviolence and peace, and I urge all of our citizens to light a candle in their home and put on a porch light to shine a ray of hope, to say that our city and people truly make America great.

May God bless our troops.

CONGRATULATING THE BLUM HIGH SCHOOL BOBCATS ON THEIR FIRST STATE TITLE

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the 2019 Blum High School Bobcats football team on winning their first ever six-man State championship title.

For Texans, high school football is not just a sport; it’s a way of life. Each week in the fall, we gather under Friday night lights and cheer our team on to victory.
The young men and coaches on our teams spend countless hours running drills, watching film, and getting ready for their moment in history. During the 2019 season, Blum High School’s dedication paid off as they rose from behind and secured a 58-52 win over the McLean Tigers at&T&T Stadium.

On behalf of the 25th District of Texas, I congratulate the Bobcats on their first State championship victory, and I wish them the very best in their bright futures.

In God we trust.

Bless our troops.

Go Bobcats.

PRESIDENT TRUMP UNITES Factions in Iran Against the United States

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, President Trump has demonstrated the limitation of his reality show, go-it-alone, incoherent approach, which helped him eke out an electoral college victory while losing the popular vote by 3 million votes, but is spectacularly ill-equipped to govern, let alone respond to a crisis that he has made worse.

Maybe there was a reason that Bush and Obama didn’t kill Soleimani when they could. Evidently, his advisors put General Soleimani’s assassination on the list of options because they thought it was so outrageous they didn’t think he would choose it.

If you thought abandoning our Kurdish allies who helped us fight ISIS was a heartless disaster, now Trump has managed to unite factions in Iran against us, delaying reform for years, managed to unite factions in Iran against us, delaying reform for years, managed to unite factions in Iran against us, delaying reform for years, managed to unite factions in Iran against us, delaying reform for years, managed to unite factions in Iran against us, delaying reform for years.

Mr. Speaker, my hometown of Sugar Land, Texas, keeps setting records and leaving all the others in the dust. Today, we found out we are the fourth fastest growing city in America, growing 49.3 percent over the last decade.

That growth would not have happened without Philip Savko. Philip ran Sugar Land Regional Airport for nearly 21 years. Under his leadership, his two decades of leadership, our airport went from flying Cessna 152’s and crop dusters to being the go-to airport in the Houston region for Fortune 500 corporate jets. One hundred of these jets use our airport on a regular basis.

Philip delivered these birds by arranging to have on-call U.S. Customs service at our airport. Philip brought 692 jobs to Sugar Land, with the impact of $93 million.

Philip took his last flight from our airport. He flew up to heaven over the holidays. We imagine Philip, on approach, God in the control tower, saying: “Philip, you are on course, on glide slope. You are cleared to land. Welcome home, dear man.”

Rest in peace, Philip, with our many, many thanks.

FASTEST GROWING CITY IN AMERICA, SUGAR LAND, TEXAS

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, my hometown of Sugar Land, Texas, keeps setting records and leaving all the others in the dust. Today, we found out we are the fourth fastest growing city in America, growing 49.3 percent over the last decade.

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REST in peace, Philip, with our many, many thanks.

SUPPORT FOR GUN RIGHTS

(Mr. COMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reaffirm my strong support for the Second Amendment and stand up for the constitutional right for all Americans to keep and bear arms. At a time when efforts are underway across the country to restrict gun ownership, patriotic Americans are rising up in strong defense of the Second Amendment. This is especially true in my home State of Kentucky, where there is significant grassroots energy on the side of defending a right that our Founding Fathers considered to be of critical importance.

Whether it be red flag laws or other proposals aimed at limiting access to firearms or ammunition, politicians across the country are seeking to roll back the basic rights of law-abiding Americans. As a member of the Congressional Second Amendment Caucus, I pledge to strongly oppose these proposals as well as any effort to infringe on the fundamental freedom of gun ownership.

HONORING VETERAN OF THE MONTH OLIVER GREEN

(Mr. SPANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SPANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring attention to a distinguished veteran in my district.

At the age of 17, Private Oliver Green enlisted in the Army just before the Korean war; and on his 18th birthday, Private Green landed at Wonsan, North Korea, in a tank landing ship. As a machine gunner assigned to the Third Infantry Division, Seventh Regiment, First Battalion, D Company, Oliver Green was quickly put into the fight, experiencing a number of combat engagements with the enemy. After being seriously wounded, Private Green went on to attend the University of Alabama and Stetson School of Law. He later became a Polk County judge, rising to become chief judge of the tenth judicial circuit in 1979.

Oliver Green is a patriot. His commitment and service to our Nation and our community have been outstanding. I am grateful for brave individuals like Oliver Green who go, and have gone, above and beyond the call of duty to serve their fellow man and to serve our Nation.

HONORING SCOTT WINTERS FOR HIS WORK SUPPORTING VETERANS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Scott Winters, the readjustment counselor at the DuBois Veterans Center in Pennsylvania’s 15th Congressional District.

Mr. Winters provides a wide range of psychosocial services offered to eligible veterans, servicemembers, and their families. His efforts assist our veterans in making a successful transition from the military to civilian life.

Recently, Mr. Winters was recognized by the Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited for presenting a listening skills course to their Veterans Service
Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Scott).  

1930  
Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding, and, yes, we have a lot of military installations in the Hampton Roads area, and we are very concerned about the present situation in the Middle East.

We want to talk about what is going on in the Committee on Education and Labor, and I just want to share a few things that we have been doing over the last year.

Comments may have been made of what Congress is or is not doing. Well, we have been protecting the income of hardworking Americans by the House passing the Raise the Wage Act, which will gradually increase the Federal minimum wage from $7.25 to $15 an hour by 2025, giving 33 million workers a raise and lifting over a million people out of poverty.

We haven’t had an increase in the minimum wage for over a decade. The last minimum wage was over 20 years ago, and inflation has eroded the value of that minimum wage so much to the point where one study concluded that a full-time, 40-hours-a-week, minimum-wage worker cannot afford a modest two-bedroom apartment in any county in the United States.

We are not talking about San Francisco or Manhattan. Not a single county in the United States can a full-time minimum-wage worker afford a modest two-bedroom apartment. So we voted in the House to increase the minimum wage.

The Paycheck Fairness Act addresses pay inequity by holding companies accountable for gender-based wage disparities and protecting a worker’s right to challenge systemic pay discrimination. We passed that bill.

The Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act, or Butch Lewis Act, will prevent the imminent collapse of our multiemployer pension system, saving over 1 million hardworking Americans their pension, while protecting those benefits and the taxpayer’s dollars. We also passed the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act to prevent violence and the injuries that occur because of that.

In addition, the committee has reported the PRO Act, the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, which will enable workers to negotiate for better wages and better working conditions.

We also passed the legislation to help in the area of children’s access to quality education and a safe learning environment.

We passed in the committee the Rebuild America’s Schools Act which will invest $100 billion to repair our public schools’ crumbling digital and physical infrastructure and will create 1.9 million jobs.

We passed two important civil rights bills in the area of education: the Equity and Inclusion Enforcement Act and Strength in Diversity Act, which will empower students, parents, and communities to challenge discriminatory education policies and increase school diversity.

Mr. Speaker, Scott Winters has gone above and beyond to be available at a moment’s notice to support veterans in his community, and his service is greatly appreciated.

We passed two important civil rights bills in the area of education: the Elementary and Secondary Education Improvement Act and the Bilingual Education Improvement Act.

We protected seniors by passing legislation, the Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act, to prevent the imminent collapse of our multiemployer pension system, saving over 1 million hardworking Americans their pension, while protecting those benefits and the taxpayer’s dollars.

We passed legislation to protect consumers from junk health plans by trying to overturn the Trump administration’s short-term, limited duration insurance rule, as well as passing the Lower Drug Costs Now Act which will reduce out-of-pocket costs for customers, lower prescription drug prices, and increase transparency.

We passed legislation that will protect children from child abuse, the Stronger Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

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So I thank the gentleman for that, and I look forward to the days ahead when I know that the gentleman has an additional agenda of legislation that he is going to be putting on the floor of the House.

Mr. COYTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, we are continuing to work.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I am sure the gentleman will. I thank the gentleman very much.

Mr. Speaker, I am really torn. I want to continue discussing the legislation that is out there, but I really stand in front of this Chamber—which at the moment is empty—with a very, very heavy heart and extraordinary concern. I am looking at where we are as a nation this evening, and I am going to really ponder tomorrow what fate may befall our men and women in the military.

A couple of hours ago, the inevitable happened. This was a freshman in high school and my science teacher was trying to give me some of the principles of physics. He was talking about every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

He was showing various examples of that. Of course, I was then playing football and I could really understand. I hit somebody, and they would hit me back; or I would push somebody and they would push back. I would like to think that I was more than equal.

Last Friday, our President took an action and launched missiles at the highest commander of the Iranian military and killed him, along with one of the major, if not the major commander of the militia units in Iraq.

That attack took place just outside the Baghdad International Airport. That was an action, presumably, to prevent some future action that might be taken by the Iranians and by their leader or directed by their leader, Soleimani.

My high school science teacher could not have been more correct. For every action, there is a reaction. And we will undoubtedly engage in a debate here on the floor and in the Congress and across the United States about whether the first action taken by the President to take out the leader of Iran’s Revolutionary Guard was an appropriate action. I think not, for a variety of reasons. And then we will also debate whether the Iranian reaction to that action which occurred a couple of hours ago was appropriate.

I am quite sure that our military on the base in Iraq at Al Asad views the Iranian action as a very serious threat. We don’t yet know the results of the briefings that they have set up, or quasi-military units that they have set up: the militias, Yemen, Houthis, Hezbollah, and others.

It is really a moment this evening for us to hold our anger, which is a normal and natural thing that certainly I, and I am sure every one of my colleagues possesses: anger at the attack on our military base.

I suppose we should also think that perhaps Iran could hold its anger, although they certainly expressed it in the streets, in the funeral ceremonies, and in the launching of ballistic missiles at an American air base.

We should hold our anger. We should say: Where did this go from here? What is the next tit for tat? Unfortunately, I don’t believe our President thought about the next move, about the equal and opposite reaction when he ordered the launching of the missiles that took out a very dangerous, bad, bad person.

I don’t think he thought about the next order, nor do I think he thought about the third, fourth, fifth, or sixth order. Who is next? We do not know, of course.

But we have a chance this evening and tomorrow, and in the days ahead, to stop and think about the next event, the next tit for tat. What does it mean now for those of us in Congress, 435—i guess it is 434 since one of our colleagues resigned today—and the Senate—undeniably occupied with impeachment?

It is time for us to reach into our desk drawer and pull out the Constitution of the United States and read Article I and have our people to do the same. When we read that, we will find that only Congress can declare war; not the President, not the Secretary of State, not the Secretary of Defense, and not a general, but only Congress.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, our President to come to the Congress and explain why we should conduct a war with Iran.

Is it not to say we cannot protect ourselves? But the next action by our military likely would be far more an action of protection but, rather, an action in response to what happened a couple of hours ago.

I would have loved and would have desired not to be here at this moment, talking about this issue but, rather, following what Mr. Scott had said about what has been done this last year for the American people, about the efforts that we have made to bring down the cost of healthcare, to provide pharmaceuticals that people can afford, and to guarantee that Americans do not lose their right to health insurance, as the President and our Republican colleagues are attempting and have attempted to do for the aluminum wage. But that is not where I am tonight.

My thoughts are with those military personnel, the airmen, many of whom fortunate, tragic sense, we are in a war and some would claim that war is now 40 years old and started way back with the embassy in Tehran being occupied, and we could say that is correct.

This is different. I am on the Armed Services Committee, and I have had the briefings and I know, as do our generals and our intelligence community, the capabilities of the Iranian military. Furthermore, we know the capabilities of their proxies, the various militia units that they have set up, or quasi-military units that have set up: the militias, Yemen, Houthis, Hezbollah, and others.

It is really a moment this evening for us to hold our anger, which is a normal and natural thing that certainly I, and I am sure every one of my colleagues possesses: anger at the attack on our military base.

I suppose we should also think that perhaps Iran could hold its anger, although they certainly expressed it in the streets, in the funeral ceremonies, and in the launching of ballistic missiles at an American air base.

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My thoughts are with those military personnel, the airmen, many of whom
are from my district and probably at the bases there in the Middle East. My thoughts are with them and their families. I pray that all are safe.

And I pray that tonight or tomorrow morning a tweet says: "I, the President of the United States, will come to Congress and explain why we should or should not pursue a war with Iran."

It is a good time for all of us to pray. It is a good time for all of us to take a deep breath and realize the path that we are on and where it might lead.

If a speechwriter must be disturbed by what has happened, I am willing to take up my responsibility here, and I anxiously await what the President of the United States of America has to say as he stands here in the Congress and explains to a joint session of the Senate and the House why we should pursue a war with Iran. That is his responsibility, and then it is our responsibility—elected by the people of America—to go to war or not to go to war. We shall see.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, January 8, 2020, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3392. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting a letter authorizing the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Gary J. Volosky, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Pub. L. 110-115); to the Committee on Armed Services.


to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a)(1); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 107-289, Sec. 2(a)); (116 Stat. 2049); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

3414. A letter from the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives, transmitting a list of reports pursuant to the Clerk, Pursuant Rule II, clause 2(b), of the Rules of the House (H. Doc. No. 116-85); to the Committee on House Administration.

3415. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Scup Fishery; Adjustment to the 2019 Winter II Quota (Docket No.: 70832662-70999-02) (RIN: 0648-XX014) received December 20, 2019, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3416. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's Annual Report to Congress on InVESTigation, and Implementation of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act Requirements, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 10601; Public Law 109-246, Sec. 635; (120 Stat. 644); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3417. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Programs Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment Rule [FRL-10005-77-OECA] received December 19, 2019, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3418. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Civil Works, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting the Innovative Materials and Advanced Technologies Report pursuant to Pub. L. 115-270, Sec. 1208; (132 Stat. 3808); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3419. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Civil Works, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (Rept. 116-366). Referred to the House Calendar.

3420. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Civil Works, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting the potential for a period to be subsequently determined the representation of the United States in communications standards-setting bodies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3421. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Programs Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Extension of the Phase-in Period for the Enforcement and Administration of Section 871(m) [Notice 2020-2] received December 30, 2019, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

[Submitted January 7, 2020]

Ms. WATERS: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 5159. A bill to provide for the disclosure of additional material information about public companies and establish a Sustainable Finance Advisory Committee, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 116-365). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Ms. SCALON: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 779. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 535) to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to designate per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (Rept. 116-366). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. PALLONE: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 4500. A bill to direct the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information to take certain actions to enhance the representation of the United States and promote United States leadership in communications standards-setting bodies, and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 116-367, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. PALLONE: Committee on Energy and Commerce. House Resolution 575. Resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that all stakeholders in the deployment of 5G communications infrastructure should carefully consider and adhere to the recommendations of “The Prague Process”; with amendments (Rept. 116-368, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. PALLONE: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 2881. A bill to require the President to develop a strategy to ensure the national security implications of the deployment of 5G communications systems and infrastructure in the United States and to assist allied and strategic partners in maximizing the security of next generation mobile telecommunication systems, infrastructure, and software, and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 116-369, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

[Submitted from the Record of January 2, 2020]

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2881 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

[Submitted January 7, 2020]

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Foreign Affairs discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2881 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to sentence 1703E(f)(3)(D)(i) of title 38, United States Code, H.J. Res. 80. Approving the request of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for a waiver under section 1703E(f) of title 38, United States Code.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs discharged from further consideration. Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Foreign Affairs discharged from further consideration. H. Res. 575 referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

[Submitted January 3, 2020]

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself and Ms. MURPHY): H.R. 5541. A bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 1992 to reauthorize programs to assist consenting Indian Tribes in meeting energy education, planning, and management needs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committees concerned.

By Ms. SHERRILL (for herself and Mr. MULLIN): H.R. 5542. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish a program for States to provide incentives to natural gas distribution companies for the improvement of natural gas distribution systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KHANNA (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SCOTTS, Mr. MURDOCH, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. CROW, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. LEVIN of Michigan, Mr. TELU of California, Mr. GREENLAND, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. POCAN, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GARAMendi, Mr. OMAR, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GALLAGHER, Ms. TESA, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. DOOGERT, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GARcIA of Illinois, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. TONKO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MOORE, Ms. SCANLON, Mr. EVANS, Mr. WELCH, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. OCASIO-CORTez, Mr. Himes, Mr. ESPAillAT, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BEYER, Ms. SPANDER, Mr. PHILLIPS, and Mr. CINNERO): H.R. 5545. A bill to prohibit the use of funds for unauthorized military force against Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be...
subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TONKO (for himself, Mr. OLSON, Mr. PETERS, and Ms. STEFANIK):
H.R. 5544. A bill to create jobs and drive innovation in the United States by supporting and promoting the manufacture of next generation technologies, including refrigerants, solvents, flame suppressant foam, blowing agents, aerosols, and propellants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RUSH:
H.R. 5545. A bill to promote the domestic manufacture and use of advanced, fuel efficient vehicles and zero emission vehicles, encourage electrification of the transportation sector, create jobs, and improve air quality, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JEFFRIES (for himself, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, and Mr. NAZIREDI):
H.R. 5546. A bill to regulate monitoring of electronic communications between an incarcerated person in a Bureau of Prisons facility and that person's attorney or other legal representative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. AXNE (for herself and Mr. KHANNA):
H.R. 5547. A bill to provide assistance for the acquisition and preservation of manufactured housing communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. HERBERGER BALLENGER):
H.R. 5548. A bill to improve the Fishery Resource Disaster Relief program of the National Marine Fisheries Service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. JOHNSON of Texas:
H.R. 5549. A bill to authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to Doris Miller posthumously for acts of valor while a member of the United States Navy during World War II; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LEVIN of Michigan (for himself and Mr. KHANNA):
H.R. 5550. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to promulgate regulations regarding disposal of materials containing perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances or aqueous film forming foam, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. NORTON:
H.R. 5551. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act and title 5, United States Code, to require group health plans, health insurance issuers offering group or individual health insurance coverage, Federal Employees Health Benefits Program health benefit plans to meet certain requirements with respect to medical child support orders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Reform, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. OMAR:
H.R. 5552. A joint resolution direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to promulgate regulations regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

[Submitted January 3, 2020]

By Mr. DELGADO:
H.R. 5553. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

[Submitted January 7, 2020]

By Ms. O’HALLERAN:
H.R. 5554. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article II Section 3. To regulate commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. RUSH:
H.R. 5555. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. JEFFRIES:
H.R. 5556. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

[Submitted January 7, 2020]

By Ms. AXNE:
H.R. 5557. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. TONKO:
H.R. 5558. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Ms. AXNE:
H.R. 5559. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Mrs. AXNE, Mr. PANTER, and Ms. STEFANIK:
H.R. 5560. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Ms. KAPITAN, Mr. PANETTA, and Mr. PANTER:
H.R. 5561. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. HIGGINS of New York:
H.R. 5562. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. TONKO:
H.R. 5563. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Mrs. AXNE:
H.R. 5564. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. RUSH:
H.R. 5565. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. JEFFRIES:
H.R. 5566. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. AXNE:
H.R. 5567. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:
H.R. 5568. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS
Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

[Submitted January 3, 2020]

H.R. 41: Ms. KAPTAN.
H.R. 1313: Ms. BLUNT Rochester.
H.R. 2895: Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 2912: Ms. KENDRA S. HORN of Oklahoma.
H.R. 4146: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 4874: Mr. WELCH, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Ms. FINKENAUER.
H.R. 5296: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONPHY of New York and Mr. MILL of Arkansas.

[Submitted January 7, 2020]

H.R. 96: Mr. Higgins of New York.
H.R. 99: Mr. KELLER.
H.R. 303: Mr. FINKENAUER.
H.R. 366: Ms. BONACICI.
H.R. 444: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 663: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 749: Ms. SPANBRIER.
H.R. 945: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 1049: Ms. BARAGÁN, Mr. PANETTA, and Ms. FINGER.
H.R. 1073: Mr. MCNENROY and Ms. LOWOREN.
H.R. 1126: Ms. SPANBERGER and Mr. GUTTHEIM.
H.R. 1128: Mr. Ted Lieu of California.
H.R. 1139: Ms. Torres Small of New Mexico.
H.R. 1175: Mr. ROY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULZ, Mr. PENCE, and Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 1185: Mr. PHILLIPS.
H.R. 1239: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. FINGER, Mrs. McBATH, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. SHALALA, Mr. ROSE of New York, Ms. FINKENAUER, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Ms. SCHERRER, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. CURRAN.
H.R. 1254: Mr. MCNENROY.
H.R. 1325: Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 1370: Mr. MASSIE.
H.R. 1379: Ms. SCHRIER, Mr. BEREA, Mr. ROSE of New York, Mr. PENCE, and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 1440: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 1497: Mrs. AXNE, Mr. KIND, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. FRITZ.
H.R. 1527: Ms. SPANBRIER.
H.R. 1530: Mr. BIRD.
H.R. 1551: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 1597: Mr. MOULTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. ALLEID, Mr. KATEING, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. BERA.

January 7, 2020
DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

[Submitted January 7, 2020]
The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CINDY HYDE-SMITH, a Senator from the State of Mississippi.

PRAYER
The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:
Let us pray.
Eternal God, our Nation needs Your mercy. The challenges are too great to be met with mere human ingenuity. You have been our protection. Shelter us until the violent storms are passed. Let Your glory shine on Your lawmakers. May their thoughts, words, and deeds prompt people to glorify You. Inspire our Senators to place their confidence completely in You. Eternal God, You are our salvation. We will trust and not be afraid, for You are our strength and song.
We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).
The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

PRAYING FOR THE UNITED STATES


To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule 1, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CINDY HYDE-SMITH, a Senator from the State of Mississippi, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER
The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

IRAN
Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I spoke yesterday about President Trump’s decision to remove the chief architect of Tehran’s terrorism from the battlefield, and I discussed the Senate’s obligation to approach this in a manner that is serious, sober, and factual.
It is right for Senators to want to learn more about the President’s major decision. Once again, I encourage all of our colleagues to attend the classified briefing which the administration will provide tomorrow. The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the CIA Director will give a classified context behind the President’s decision, and they will discuss the administration’s strategy to protect our personnel and defend our Nation’s interests in the new landscape. I would ask every Senator on both sides to bring an open mind to this briefing.

In particular, we should all remember that the history of Iranian aggression began long, long before this news cycle or this Presidency. In the decades since the Islamic revolution of 1979, as the White House has changed parties and our administrations have changed strategies, Tehran’s simmering anti-American hatred, proxy violence, and steady support for terrorism worldwide have remained entirely constant through all of these years.

In effect, Iran has been at war with the United States for years. While it has taken pains to avoid direct conflict, Iran’s authoritarian regime has shown no compunction about kidnapping, torturing, and killing Americans since its earliest days—or Iraqis or fellow Iranians, for that matter. From the 52 diplomatic personnel held hostage in Tehran for 444 days back in 1979, to the hundreds of U.S. service members killed in bombings carried out by Iran’s proxies—Beirut in 1983, Riyadh in 1995, Khobar in 1996—to the hundreds more killed or maimed in Iraq by the explosives and indirect fire attacks ordered by General Soleimani himself, to the constant flows of resources and equipment that prop up despots and terrorist organizations throughout the region, Iran’s game plan has been an open book: Use third-party terrorism to inflict death and suffering on its enemies while avoiding direct confrontation.

The threat Iran poses is, certainly, not new. Its violence is not some unique reaction to President Trump or to Prime Minister Netanyahu or to any other current leader. Violence runs in the bloodstream of this evil regime.

In particular, our colleagues who apparently want to blame President Trump for Iranian provocative foreign policy should reflect on the previous administration’s recent history.

Iran exploited President Obama’s withdrawal from Iraq. Soleimani and his agents filled the void and dramatically expanded Iranian influence inside Iraq. They were able to impose a sectarian vision on Iraq that disenfranchised the Sunnis, fueled the rise of ISIS, and plunged the region into chaos.

Over in Syria, more weakness from the Obama administration opened yet another door for Iran. The Democratic administration failed to confront the Iranian-backed Assad regime as it slaughtered literally hundreds of thousands of Syrians and displaced millions more. Once again, amid the chaos, Soleimani worked and thrived.

Of course, all of this was the backdrop for the brazen, legacy-shopping
nuclear arrangement that sent billions of dollars to fuel Iran’s further violence. Even my friend the current Democratic leader knew it at the time. Before he himself voted for a resolution of disapproval on President Obama’s Iran deal, Senator SCHUMER said: “After 10 years, if Iran is the same nation as it is today, we will be worse off with this agreement than without it.” That was the Democratic leader, who opposed President Obama’s Iran nuclear deal, and the Democratic leader was prescient, for that is exactly what happened.

The previous administration failed to confront Iran when necessary. So the mullahs used their windfall from the disastrous nuclear deal to double down on hegemonic aspirations all across the Middle East. A Democratic administration just had 8 years to deal with the growing threat posed by Iran, and it failed demonstrably. Iran was stronger and more lethal at the end of the Obama Presidency than at the beginning.

So I would ask my Democratic colleagues today not to rush to lash out at President Trump when he actually demonstrates what he means when he enforces his redlines, when he takes real action to counter lethal threats against Americans.

Wishing away tensions with Iran is really not an option. The Iranians have spent decades making that perfectly clear. “The question is whether we as a body would prefer the administration to stand by as Iran kills Americans or whether we are prepared to work with the President to stand up to Tehran’s terrorism and shadow wars.”

IMPEACHMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, every day that the House Democrats refuse to stand up to Tehran’s terrorism and more lethal at the end of the Obama Presidency than the beginning.

Back during the Clinton impeachment, it was Congressman JERRY NADLER who said: “An impeachment substantially supported by one of our major political parties and largely opposed by the other . . . will lack legitimacy.” Chairman NADLER was right 20 years ago.

At this point, they may wish they had taken their own advice. Instead, what the country got was the most rushed, least thorough, and most unfair Presidential impeachment in American history, and now the prosecution seems to have gotten cold feet. Nearly 3 weeks after the rushed vote they claim was so urgent, they are still debating whether or not they even want to see the trial proceed. They voted for it 3 weeks ago.

The House Democrats say they are waiting for some mythical leverage. I have had difficulty figuring out where the leverage is. Apparently, this is their proposition: If the Senate does not agree to break with our own unanimous, bipartisan precedent from 1999 to let Speaker PELOSI hand-design a different procedure for this Senate trial, then, they might not even dump this mess in our lap. It is one cynical political game right on top of another. It was not enough for the House to blow through its own norms and precedents and succumb to the partisan temptation of a subjective impeachment that every other House had resisted for 230 years. Now it needs to erode our constitutional order even further in order to invent a new, sort of pretrial hostage negotiation wherein the House gets to run the show over here in the Senate.

Meanwhile, they are creating exactly the kind of unfair and dangerous delay in impeachment that Alexander Hamilton specifically warned against in the Federalist Papers. This is already the longest delay in American history between the impeachment vote and the delivery of the House’s impeachment messages. It was not enough for this House Democrat majority systematically took all of the Framers’ warnings about partisan abuses of the impeachment power—took everything the Founders said not to do—and thought: Now, there is an idea. Why don’t we try that?

Impeaching a President is just about the most serious action that any House of Representatives can ever take. How inappropriate and how embarrassing to rush forward on a partisan basis and then treat what you have done like a political toy. How contemptuous of the American people to tell them, for weeks, that you feel this extraordinary step is so urgent and then delay it indefinitely for political purposes. How embarrassing, but also how revealing.

Speaker PELOSI’s actions over the past 3 weeks have confirmed what many Americans have suspected about this impeachment process all along—that the House Democrats have only ever wanted to abuse this grave constitutional process for partisan ends right from the beginning.

Well, here is where we are. The Senate is not about to let the Speaker corrode our own Senate process and precedents in the same way. The first organizing registration resolution for the 1999 Clinton trial was approved unanimously, 100 to nothing. It left midtrial debate whether or not they even wanted to abuse this grave constitutional process for partisan ends right from the beginning.

The Speaker of the House is not going to handwrite new rules for the Senate. It is not going to happen.

Look, these are serious matters. At some point in time, the Democrats’ rage at this particular President will begin to fade, but the sad precedent they are setting will live on. The American people deserve a lot better than this.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The Acting President pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The Acting President pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The Acting President pro tempore. 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 Jovita Carranza, of Illinois, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Acting President pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

IRAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now, in the aftermath of the U.S. military operation that took out Iranian General Soleimani, we need to be asking the right questions and remain clear-eyed about what might happen next.

I have grown increasingly concerned about the strike against Soleimani and what it might mean for the safety of American troops in the region and the future of America’s involvement in the Middle East. The President has promised that he would not drag the American people into another endless war in the Middle East. The President’s actions, however, have seemingly increased the risk that we could be dragged into exactly such a war.

Unfortunately, this contradiction is far too typical of how the President has conducted foreign policy over the last 3 years. The President’s decision making has been erratic, and it has been impulsive, without regard to the long-term consequences of America’s actions abroad. He prefers reality show diplomacy and photo ops with foreign leaders to substantive progress. As a result, the President’s foreign policy has been dangerously incompetent.

When you look at nearly every hotspot around the globe, he has made
the situation worse, not better. North Korea—3 years after failed “negotiations,” North Korea remains belligerent, defiant, and intent on developing ICBMs. Syria—after years of sacrifice and struggle against ISIS, one impulsive decision to withdraw our troops risks undoing all our progress. Russia—every meeting the President holds with Putin always seems to result in Putin’s coming out ahead. We are now at risk of the situation with Iran heading for a similar deterioration.

The foreign policy actions so far in North Korea, in Syria, in Russia, and just about everywhere else can be described in two words: “erratic” and “impulsive.” I am worried that a few months from now his Iran policy will be described in exactly the same way.

As the President’s circle of advisers has gotten smaller and more insular and as nearly all of the dissident voices have been forced out of the administration, there seems to be no one left to tell the President no. At times like this, skeptical voices need to ask the right questions, and Congress—Congress must provide a check on the President and assert our constitutional role in matters of war and peace.

In my view, President Trump does not—does not—have authority for a war with Iran. There are several important pieces of legislation by both Senators Kaine and Sanders to limit further escalation with Iran and assert Congress’s prerogative on these matters. Both should receive votes in the Senate.

I plan to ask pointed questions of this administration at a briefing for the Gang of 8 later this afternoon. We need answers to some crucial questions, and there are many. Here are the two that are most on Americans’ minds: What are Iran’s most probable responses to the strike on Soleimani? Are we prepared for each of these responses, and how effective will our counterresponses be?

There was some alarming confusion yesterday about the military’s position on the future of U.S. troops in Iraq. What, in truth, does the Soleimani strike mean for the long-term stability of Iraq and our presence there? How does the administration plan to prevent an escalation of hostilities and the potential for large-scale confrontation in the Middle East? These are just some of the questions the administration has to answer. The safety and security of our American troops and of the American people are at stake.

IMPEACHMENT
Madam President, on impeachment, this morning, I return to the most pressing question facing my colleagues at this moment: Will the Senate conduct a fair impeachment trial of the President of the United States of America?

The Framers suspected that any impeachment would ignite the passions of the public and naturally would create partisans who are either sympathetic or impervious to the President’s interests. That is why the Framers gave the Senate the responsibility to try impeachment cases. When it came to a matter as serious as the potential removal of a President, the Framers meant the Senate was the only body of government with enough independence to rise above partisan considerations and act with the necessary impartiality. Will we live up to that vision?

Right now the Republican leader and I have very different ideas about what it means to conduct a fair trial. Democrats believe a fair trial considers all the relevant facts and allows for witnesses and documents. We don’t know what the evidence will say. It may exculpate the President. It may further incriminate him. We only want a trial that examines all the facts and lets the chips fall where they may.

The Republican leader, in contrast, apparently believes the trial should feature no witnesses, no relevant documents, and proceed according to the desires of the White House, the defendant. The Republican leader seems more concerned with being able to claim he shut down any possibility for the Constitution to be carried out than actually carrying out our constitutional duty.

Because the Republican leader has been completely unwilling to help get the facts for the trial, the question will have to be decided by the majority of Senators in this Chamber. That means four Republican Senators at any point can compel the Senate to call the fact witnesses and subpoena the relevant documents. That is what we know will shed additional light on the truth.

I have heard several arguments from the other side as to why we shouldn’t vote on witnesses and documents at the outset of the trial. The Republican leader and several Republican Senators have suggested that each side complete their arguments, and then we will decide on witnesses.

This idea is as backward as it sounds. Trials should be informed by witnesses and documents; they are not an afterthought. Their reasoning and McConnell’s reasoning has an “Alice in Wonderland” logic to it: Let’s have each side make their case, he says, and then vote on whether the prosecutors and defense should have all the available evidence to make those cases.

We know what is going on here. Our Republican colleagues, even Leader McConnell, the American people want witnesses and documents. Sixty percent of Republicans do. They are afraid to say no, but they don’t want to vote on them because that might offend the defendant in this trial. President, you are trying to kick the can down the road.

It is a strange position for Republican colleagues to take. They are willing to kick the can down the road, as I said, on questions of witnesses and documents, but they are not willing to say when or if they will ever support it.

Just yesterday, one of the four witnesses we have requested, former National Security Advisor Bolton, said he is ready to testify and has new information to share related to the case at hand. Republicans were dodging and twisting themselves into pretzels trying to explain why someone with direct knowledge of what the President did and would testify under oath immediately.

I believe that illustrates the fundamental weakness of the Republican position. None of our Republican colleagues can advance an argument about why it would make sense for the Senate to wait until the end of the trial to obtain all the evidence.

Make no mistake, on the question of witnesses and documents, Republicans may run, but they can’t hide. There will be votes at the beginning on whether to call the four witnesses we have requested and the documents we have identified. America and the eyes of history will be watching what my Republican colleagues do.

Another argument I have heard from the other side is that it is not the Senate’s job to go outside established by the House impeachment probe. I would reply that it very much is the Senate’s job. The Constitution gives the Senate the sole power to try impeachment cases, not merely impeachment cases but the sole power to try them. It is not the Senate’s job to put the House impeachment proceedings on a weeklong rerun on C-SPAN. Our job is to try the case, to hold a real, fair, and honest trial. That means examining the arguments. That means letting the prosecutors request witnesses and documents to make their case.

This is not just my view. It has been the view of every Senate facing impeachment, except for one solitary case, every impeachment trial of any official, in the history of the Senate—and there have been a bunch—had witnesses.

A trial isn’t a trial without evidence. A trial without all the facts is a farce. If the President is ultimately acquitted at the end of a sham trial, his acquittal will be meaningless. That is why the President himself should demand a full and fair trial.

President Trump, if you have nothing to hide, if you think the case is as flimsy as you say, call your Chief of Staff. Tell him to release the documents. Call Leader McConnell and tell him what you already told the country; that you would “love” for your aides to testify in a fair trial. President Trump, if you believe you have done nothing wrong, you have nothing to be afraid of from witnesses and documents.
contrary, if you are afraid of witnesses and documents, most Americans will believe you have something to hide and that you fear you have done something very, very wrong.

If my Republican colleagues believe the President has done nothing wrong, they should have nothing to fear from witnesses and documents. In fact, they should welcome them. What better way to prove to the American people that we are handling this matter with the gravity it requires. What better way to prove to their constituents that they are not just doing the President’s bidding and not just making this a sham trial because of obeisance to the President of the United States.

If every Senate Republican votes to prevent witnesses and documents from coming before the Senate, if every Republican Senator votes for a rigged trial that hides the truth, the American people would have no confidence in their Senate as a part of a large and awful coverup.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

JAPAN TRADE DEAL

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I have come to the floor today to start this new year by really encouraging my friends on each side of the aisle to approach this coming legislative session with some optimism because there are some good things we can do.

We come to the floor and we hear about Iran and we hear about Soleimani. They sought differences of opinion there. I am one of those. I represent a major military post, and I know that so many of our men and women in uniform said: You know what, this should have been done long ago. This is a known terrorist who has conducted terrorist attacks on six continents, even tried it here in the United States. They felt like the President was justified.

We were talking about impeachment, and of course we know it has been widely reported that our friends across the aisle and over in the House started 3 years ago trying to find something they could impeach Donald Trump on—just something. It was going to be emotive, or it was going to be collusion, or it was going to be coercion, or it was going to be Russia, or it was going to be bribery. There had to be something there because, you know what, they just don’t like the guy. They don’t like him. So they have been at it nonstop. They let that get in the way of some good things that people would like to get done.

For the next few minutes, I want to encourage us to think beyond subpoenas and trial and negativity and witness statements and instead focus on three things that are right in front of us: two successfully negotiated trade deals that will benefit farmers, manufacturers, and small businesses and owners and producers not only in my State of Tennessee but across the entire country.

In the Volunteer State alone, we have 967 foreign-based businesses, and they have invested $37.3 billion in capital improvements, and currently they employ more than 147,000 Tennesseans. That is good for our State. Trade is important to us in Tennessee, insourcing these jobs.

Of particular importance to us is maintaining great trade relations with Japan. Do you know what is so amazing? We have so many people who didn’t even know that the Japan trade agreement went into effect on January 1. The mainstream media was so busy focused on impeachment and other things that they didn’t even realize this was a deal that will do a good job for us.

Our former U.S. Ambassador to Japan, who is a Tennessean, Ambassador Hagerty, had negotiated this before he left. This recently agreed-to Japan trade deal will support 40,000 jobs that are already provided by Japanese companies. The new deal will also solidify Tennessee’s relationships with Japanese partners like Nissan North America, Toyota, Bridgestone, Nissan, and Denso Manufacturing—all with a presence in Tennessee and all employing Tennesseans.

It is going to create greater market access to Tennessee’s agriculture products, specifically pork, cheese, and wine. It will eliminate or lower tariffs on $2 billion worth of U.S. exports, including beef, which will put Tennessee and American farmers on a level playing field with their competitors. That is a good thing for our agricultural community. I cannot overstate how big a win this is for Tennesseans and for Americans, and there is more on the horizon.

CHINA TRADE DEAL

Madam President, later this month, President Trump will solidify a trade deal with China that will eliminate or roll back tariffs and provide some much needed protection for our patents and trademarks and copyrights that will allow innovators in our creative community, like our Tennessee songwriters, screenwriters, TV producers, and our actors, to enjoy the benefits of a free market. This has been a long time coming. There is a lot more to do.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Madam President, this may recall at the end of 2018—not 2019 but at the end of 2018—President Trump notified Congress that he would soon provide us with implementing legislation for the newly signed United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement. We call it the USMCA.

At that moment, the House majority leadership was presented with the opportunity to prioritize American workers over partisan politicking.

What was their choice? Their choice was to choose partisan politicking and leave the American workers on the sideline, leave these auto manufacturing workers on the sideline while they focused in on partisan bickering. We all know what happened.

In 2019, petty revenge schemes took priority and trade relations with our closest allies were shoved aside to accommodate a yearslong campaign. As I said at the beginning of my remarks, for 3 years they have wanted to undo the 2016 election.

In May, instead of prioritizing the creation of nearly 176,000 jobs, House Democrats decided to spend their time drafting subpoenas. In June, instead of focusing on the 12 million jobs already depending on good trade relations with Canada and Mexico, House Democrats held four votes on these subpoenas.

It was the same story in July, in August, and even then. House Democrats pushed forward with their impeachment ambitions at all costs. They had to do it. They had made a promise that they were going to go get him. They neglected the owners of over 120,000 American small businesses that export goods throughout North America. They put themselves and their priorities before the needs of the American people.

As late as October, the Speaker of the House continued to stall, inventing excuse after excuse when it came to pushing the USMCA negotiations to the sidelines in favor of partisan attacks. Even Members of her own caucus sought to distance themselves from those attacks.

By the end of the year, the House majority’s resolve to ignore their duty, finally began to splinter.

They struck a deal with the White House, but even then, the compromises they pushed for were barely, hardly worth wasting an entire year’s worth of potential economic opportunity. There was a lot of opportunity cost to businesses to make way for House Democrats’ partisan bickering.

We have brokered successful trade deals with Japan, with China—deals that America’s farmers, manufacturers, producers, and small businesses have waited for, for a very long time. Now, after a year’s worth of delays, excuses, and outright obstruction on the part of House Democrats, we are forced to ask those farmers and workers to wait just a little bit longer. It isn’t what’s best for the country. It certainly is best for our Nation’s economy and certainly not what is best for Tennessee.

In the coming weeks, I encourage my colleagues to stay focused on policies that may not dominate the headlines but are doing right by the thoughts of Tennesseans from one end of the State to the other and certainly of Americans all across this country who are looking for trade opportunities and opportunities to grow their businesses in this robust and growing economy.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.
Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this morning, the Republican majority leader took to the floor and spoke at great length about the execution of General Soleimani. General Soleimani, who was the military leader in Iran, was killed by a drone strike at the authorization of the President of the United States, Donald Trump.

Senator MCCONNELL, this morning, made a lengthy case about the background of General Soleimani. It is hard to argue with the facts he brought to the floor. In fact, I would concede and most would agree that General Soleimani, in his time, was an architect of terrorism and that, in the course of his career, there has been American blood on his hands. That is fact, but it wasn’t a fact just discovered in the last few weeks. The Presidents of both political parties have known this about General Soleimani for a long period of time. They have had the benefit of a classified briefing, but they didn’t seize those opportunities. Presidents of both parties decided it was prudent not to do it.

The question that has been raised now is: why did the President, at this moment, decide to execute the general? We know this general and his past activity have had an impact not only on the United States but on the Middle East and many other innocent people. The question that has been raised is: why at this moment? Why did it make sense at this moment?

But for a few Members of the Senate, most of us have not had extensive briefings or an opportunity to ask questions of this administration about the timing of this critical decision. We will get our chance tomorrow. There is a classified briefing in which representatives at the highest level of this administration will come before us and explain why they believe the President of the United States was right at this moment to do that and why it makes sense at this moment.

Let us make certain that if we are going to move forward with hostilities against Iran, we do it under our constitutional requirement to have a full debate before the American people have come before the American people with flimsy evidence or even misleading evidence to justify military action. I know the bitter consequences of war. Even the best American troops are going to suffer casualties and deaths in the execution of those decisions.

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IMPEACHMENT

Madam President, secondly, I would like to address the issue of the impeachment trial, which the Senate majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, raised this morning.

Before I was elected to Congress, I made a living as a lawyer. I took many cases to trial. Few, if any, ever moved along without knowing about all the facts of the cases to trial. We often had to look into evidence to try cases. We often looked into evidence to try cases. What I am speaking of are the for-profit colleges and universities of the United States. These colleges and universities, sadly, have written a notorious record when it comes to the treatment of their students. They have often cheated their students, luring them into signing up for expensive, often worthless college courses with false promises and inflated outcomes if they graduate.

Today, the students are left with massive student debts, a diploma that is worthless, credits that can’t be transferred to any other reputable college or university, and the prospects of a job that is almost impossible to find. In many cases, these sham operations actually go out of business in the middle of the student’s education.

As an industry, for-profit colleges need to be remembered for two numbers—two numbers that tell the story of the for-profit industry. Nineteen percent of all postsecondary students go to for-profit colleges and universities in the United States. The University of Phoenix, DeVry—you have heard their names. They advertise quite widely. Nine percent of students are attracted to these for-profit colleges and universities. But 33 percent of all of the federal student loan defaults in the United States are by the students who chose to attend those colleges and universities.

What is going on here, with 9 percent of the students and 33 percent of the student loan defaults? The answer is obvious. The cost of education at for-profit colleges and universities is too high.
high. Students incur more debt than they would by attending community colleges, city colleges, or other universities and colleges that have good reputations.

Secondly, the education is substandard. You can advertise everything online about this great education. I can recall an ad that was on television in the Washington, DC, area a few years ago, and it showed a young woman—probably, not much older than you—in her pajamas, on her bed, saying: I am going to college on my laptop here.

Well, that kind of easy education, many times, is no education at all. At for-profit colleges and universities, too many students end up taking these expensive courses that are meaningless. It turns out that none of these courses can be transferred to some other school or university. When you take these courses, you can't get a job. You have to spend time and you end up with so-called college credits by for-profit colleges and universities, no one else will take them. No one else accepts them. They laugh at them. Then the student can hang in there long enough with massive student debt, end up with a diploma that is a joke, a diploma that can't even lead to a job. That is what the for-profit colleges and universities are all about. Despite the fact that they have been pretty widespread across the United States, many of them have gone bankrupt.

What happens to you as a student if you have gone to one of these universities that bilked you all these promises, too many students end up along the way about taking college courses and how it is going to end up being an education that will lead to a job, and it turns out they were all lies, fraud, deceit, deception? You have the debt, but you can't find a job. You went through 4, 5 years of these so-called courses at for-profit colleges and universities, and the only thing you have to show for it is a debt that is going to decide the rest of your life.

It is not just the for-profit college industry that is burdening and exploiting our students. I come to the floor this morning because, sadly, at this moment in time, an agency of our government is complicit. Secretary Betsy DeVos and the U.S. Department of Education have made a fateful decision in time, an agency of our government in the for-profit college industry that is burdening and exploiting our students. I come to the floor this morning because, sadly, at this moment in time, an agency of our government in the for-profit college industry that is burdening and exploiting our students.

Students that I have just described. Let me explain. After a for-profit college defrauds a student—lies to the student—Federal student loan debt canceled if their college or university defrauded them. For Remington, 71 percent agree with that statement; Democrats, 87 percent. Seventy-eight percent of the American people say that if these colleges lied to them, the students shouldn't end up holding the bag. It is pretty obvious.

But sadly, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos is trying to make it difficult, if not impossible, for defrauded student borrowers to get the relief. Secretary DeVos has allowed a backlog of—listen to this—more than 223,000 borrowers to apply individually instead of being allowed to appeal under Secretary DeVos's new rule. Even if more evidence of deception and misconduct is found.

This new rule also puts taxpayers on the hook end relief, shields schools from being held directly accountable by students. The DeVos rule eliminated the current prohibition on institutions using class action restrictions and mandatory arbitrations as conditions of enrollment.

These practices, which you have seen over and over again by Corinthian and ITT Tech and others, require borrowers to sign away their rights when they go to school. Think about that. You are 19 years old, and you are signing away your college education. You are going before one of these schools. They push in front of you that you have to sign up for $10,000 or $20,000 in tuition and sign the following contract. There you are, at age 19 without much life experience, being asked to sign a contract that you know what the fine print says? The fine print says that if I am lying to you, you can't go to court. Most students don't even understand that. They sign it because they are off to college, thinking, fine, here is something to be educated and have a life, a future. They don't know they are being deceived by these schools.

Secretary DeVos has said: Sorry students, you signed that paper when you were 19, and now you are stuck with it. It is impossible for student borrowers to get relief under this new rule by Secretary DeVos. According to an analysis by the Institute of College Access & Success, the new Secretary DeVos rule requires that borrowers end up forgoing, at most, 3 percent of the loans associated with school misconduct. They will be able to recoup just 33 percent of that relief from the schools themselves, and taxpayers will foot the difference. The current rule is estimated to forgive 33 percent of loans associated with misconduct and recoup a greater percentage of the relief from schools. Secretary DeVos has loaded up the U.S. Department of Education with people who have been in the for-profit industry. These are folks who are legislating rules for their industry but not good for the American student borrowers. The bottom line is, the DeVos rule makes it harder for borrowers to receive relief, and the schools who committed the misconduct still pay for a lower portion of the relief that is given.

I introduced S.J. Res. 56 last September to overturn Secretary DeVos's borrower defense rule. Representative Lucy of Florida introduced a companion resolution in the House. Many organizations have endorsed my bill, including the Leadership Conference on this automatic discharge, which was the case under the Obama administration. With this new rule, Secretary DeVos is saying to borrowers: We are not on your side. You are on your own. In addition, if a borrower's claim for relief is denied, they are allowed to appeal under Secretary DeVos's new rule. Even if more evidence of deception and misconduct is found.
Civil and Human Rights, the AFL–CIO, American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, Consumer Federation of America, Student Veterans of America, and the NAACP, but there is one most recently that I would like to share with you because I think it is important that Members of the Senate of both political parties realize that we now have a major organization—a nonpartisan organization—that speaks for the veterans of America who have endorsed this effort.

I have in my hand a letter submitted to me by James Oxford, who goes by the nickname “Bill,” national commander of the American Legion of the United States of America, sent to me on December 18, 2019. He tells the story of veterans who were exploited by these for-profit colleges and universities. They ended up serving our country, earning their GI bill of rights, then losing their benefits to these schools—worthless schools—and going further to pay for their education.

Commander Oxford sent this letter.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

December 18, 2019.

Dear Senator Durbin:

On behalf of the nearly 2 million members of The American Legion, I write to express our support for Joint Resolution 56, providing for congressional disapproval of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to, “Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability.”

The rule, as currently written, is fundamentally rigged against defrauded borrowers of student loans, depriving them of the opportunity for debt relief that Congress intended to afford them under the Higher Education Act. Affirming this position is American Legion Resolution No. 82: Preserve Veteran Member Rights to Gainful Employment and Borrower Defense Protections, adopted in our National Convention 2017.

Thousands of student veterans have been defrauded over the years—promised their credits would transfer when they wouldn’t, given false or misleading job placement rates in marketing, promised one educational experience when they were recruited, but given something completely different. This type of deception against our veterans and service members has been a lucrative scam for unscrupulous actors.

As veterans are aggressively targeted due to their service to our country, they must be afforded the right to group relief. The Department of Education’s “Borrower Defense” rule eliminates this right, forcing veterans to individually prove their claim, share the specific type of financial harm they suffered, and prove the school knowingly made substantial misrepresentations. The preponderance of evidence required for this process is so onerous that the Department of Education itself estimated that only 3 percent of applicants would get relief.

Whether you are a Democrat or Republican, don’t go waving that flag and tell everybody how much you love our veterans and ignore this letter. The leader of the largest veterans group in the United States of America—a nonpartisan group—told us these schools defrauded veterans, and Secretary DeVos’s new rule means that these veterans will never get relief. Ninety-seven percent will never get any relief.

In a matter of a few days—maybe weeks—I will be calling this matter to the floor. I am asking my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to put the party labels outside, hang them up in the cloakroom, come on inside here, and stand up for students across America who did their best to get a college education and were deceived in the process, stand up for students who were loaded up with student debt, which could destroy their lives, and give them a fighting chance for a future by saying that Secretary DeVos’s borrower defense rule is unfair to veterans, unfair to students, and unfair to American families.

I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the right thing when the time comes and give these borrowers a second chance at being financially independent Americans who can contribute to our national economic growth. For our veterans, please join me in making sure that Secretary DeVos’s borrower defense rule is disapproved by both the House and the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The Presiding Officer.

Mr. Murphy. Mr. President, at a time of international turmoil and crisis like this, all of us, I think, are sometimes prone to hyperbole. I count myself as part of that club. I endeavor to do better.

It doesn’t serve this body well to warn of bad decisions that could lead to war if we are only doing it to serve political ends or to bloody up a political opponent. Crying wolf also anesthetizes the public and risks dulling the country’s senses at a moment when the peril is real. Anytime we are considering asking the men and women of our Armed Forces and their families to make further sacrifices for their country, we have to treat those moments with the gravity they deserve.

Let me state at the outset of my remarks that there are important reasons why I believe that the United States and the United States do not want to enter into a conventional conflict that would likely involve the United States taking steps to remove the Supreme Leader from power and which would likely in an invasion of Iran. But let me make it clear that the United States in 2003 look like child’s play.

The United States, of course, remember the Iraq war—at least, I think we do. Our military leaders know that a short-term fight in Iran would be much bloodier and would be much more costly than the initial invasion of Iraq. Iran, for instance, has twice the population of Iraq. A long-term counterinsurgency in Iran would be endless, potentially costing hundreds of thousands of lives.

The Iranian leadership also knows that the United States might never defensively defeat a drawn-out insurgency. Iranian leaders also know they likely wouldn’t be around to see that eventual conclusion because the United States would, at the very least, likely be successful in ending the existing regime.

So neither side is likely war-gaming for victory. Even those who are deeply critical of President Trump’s Iran policy should acknowledge this, but as a student of history, I know that the annals of war are replete with cataclysmic conflicts that began not by choice but by accident, negligence, and inattention.

So today, when I warn of the United States being on a potential path to war with Iran, that is my concern, that the utter lack of strategy, the complete absence of nuance, the abandoned communication and coordination with our allies and the alacrity of experienced counsel will end up getting thousands of Americans needlessly killed.

This is not the first warning of this kind I have presented. A year and a half ago, the President ignored the advice of his first Secretary of State and his first Secretary of Defense and unilaterally pulled the United States out of the Iran nuclear agreement, despite the fact that every expert agreed that Iran was in compliance. Then, to make things worse, President Trump enacted a series of devastating unilateral sanctions on Iran. No other nations joined with us. In fact, most of our allies actively and aggressively worked against us, trying to undermine and work around those sanctions in order to save the nuclear agreement. This was not just a political crisis, it was extraordinary and a sign of how weak President Trump has made America abroad.
The sanctions still took a dramatic toll on Iran’s economy, and like everybody predicted, the Iranian Government didn’t sit still. They began to push back, attacking Saudi oil pipelines, capturing European oil tankers, and ratcheting up threats against U.S. forces. For this reason, President changed his story every week. Some days he said he would sit down and negotiate with the Iranians without preconditions. Other days his top people said they wouldn’t sit down unless they had an absurdly long list of preconditions. Other days, President Trump said he wanted to blast Iran off the map. It was a comedy of diplomatic errors, compounded nearly weekly with conflicting message after conflicting message that made it difficult for Iran to approach negotiations with us, even if they wanted to.

By this winter, the situation was spiraling out of control. Iranian-backed militias launched a rocket attack that killed a U.S. private contractor in Iraq. The United States responded by killing at least 24 Iraqi militia members. Then Iraqi militia, supported by Iran, stormed our Embassy, culminating, for now, in the drone strike that killed General Qassem Soleimani last week in Iraq. There is no reason things had to get to this point. When President Trump came into office, Iran had stopped their quest for nuclear weapons capabilities, and Iran was complying with an intrusive inspections regime where they didn’t want to.

Iranian-backed militias had stopped firing rockets at U.S. personnel in Iraq. In fact, they were actually working on a U.S.-led project in Iraq—the eradication of ISIS.

President Obama had united the entire world against Iran. Even Russia and China were working side by side with the United States to constrict Iran’s nuclear weapons program. And with the agreement secured, this global coalition was teed up and ready to be mobilized by President Trump to pressure Iran to make the next set of concessions on their ballistic missile program and their support for terrorist proxies across the region.

But Trump’s bizarre and nonsensical Iran policy threw all that leverage away willingly, voluntarily. Despite the economic sanctions, Iran today is more wealthy than it was a decade ago. The government is more powerful than ever before. Just weeks ago, Iran had been wracked by anti-government protests, but President Trump’s recent actions have united the country against America and against our allies in one fell swoop. One only needs to look at yesterday, when millions of Iranians took to the streets for Soleimani’s funeral—a mass outpouring of support that the Iranian regime could never have hoped to inspire on its own.

Compared to 3 years ago at the end of the Obama Administration, today Iran is closer to restoring its proxy state in Syria, Iran is more influential in Yemen, Iran is more threatening to U.S. troops in Iraq and across the Middle East, and Iran is closer to a nuclear weapon.

The simple truth is that Iran is stronger and we are less safe today when President Trump was inaugurated, but it gets, implausibly, even worse.

Because the strike on Soleimani is so destabilizing and so unstrategically provocative, the U.S. position in Iraq—where we are still battling ISIS—is under threat as Americans have been ordered to evacuate. All U.S. counter-ISIS operations have been suspended. NATO has stopped its ongoing efforts to fight ISIS. The Israeli Parliament has begun the process of kicking out all U.S. forces from the country—exactly what Qassem Soleimani had worked for years to achieve.

All of that, on the back of Iran’s newfound strength in the region, is the reason there is so much head-shaking happening right now about why President Trump would want Iran as a partner in the fight against ISIS. As President Trump has made it clear, he is preparing to respond by committing American military or political leaders or use cyber warfare to go after critical infrastructure. And maybe we don’t invade Iran. Maybe we just blast their countryside with bombs or try to disable their military from above.

Of course, no matter the scope of the conflict, no matter how long this escalatory cycle lasts, the one thing we know is this: None of this has anything to do with making us safer. This cycle that President Trump’s rejection of a diplomatic agreement with Iran that he didn’t like just because it had Barack Obama’s name on it. A political grudge set off a series of events that now has us lodged in a crisis moment of today and the real possibility that more of President Trump’s stumbling will lead us into a world-changing conflict with Iran.

We, the Senators, have seen no evidence that the assassination of Soleimani was prevent an imminent attack on the United States. I remain open to seeing that intelligence, but 5 days later, Congress has not received a briefing from the administration. We are apparently going to get that tomorrow. But both President Obama and President Bush had the ability to kill Soleimani. They didn’t because their experts believed that executing the second most powerful political figure in Iran—no matter how evil he was, no matter how many American lives he was responsible for—would end up getting more, not fewer, Americans killed.

We don’t know in what form the reprisal from Iran will come or when, but it will come. And, listen, we shouldn’t be afraid of reprisals in the wake of truly necessary military actions by the United States to protect our interests abroad. But when that attack arrives, President Trump has telegraphed that he is preparing to respond by committing war crimes against the Iranian people. He says he will bomb cultural sites, filled with civilian visitors, in retaliation. I can’t believe this needs to be said on the floor of the U.S. Senate, but that is something terrorists do, not the United States.

Although this administration keeps saying they don’t want war, there is no logic to their circular theory of Iran policy. Trump believes that to change Iran’s behavior, we need to escalate our own actions. Then when our escalation begins to backfire, from Tehran, Trump and his Iran hawks come to the conclusion that this must be due to the fact that our escalation wasn’t serious enough. The theory becomes unprovable because the Iran hawks just contend, failure after failure, that we just need one more escalation and one more escalation and one more escalation. This is the exact behavior that could land us in a kinetic conflict with Iran that costs America military or political leaders or use cyber warfare to go after critical infrastructure. And maybe we don’t invade Iran. Maybe we just blast their countryside with bombs or try to disable their military from above.

Politics is part of what got us here, but maybe politics is part of how we get out of this mess. Congress can cut off funding for President Trump’s war of choice with Iran. We can make clear, Republicans and Democrats, that the President cannot take military action without congressional consent. And of course the American people can say that their say too. They can rise up, as they did in many cities this past weekend, and cry out in protest over President Trump’s decision to put politics over our Nation’s security. That public pressure may push ailes of the President’s here in the Senate to stand with Democrats in opposition to this reckless risk to our Nation’s security. It is not too late to put a stop to this madness.

Iran is an adversary. I don’t want another war. But I have some memories, memories over all of that nation’s misdeeds in the region. It is in our national interest to conduct a foreign policy that weakens Iran’s ability to threaten us, our allies, and our interests. But for the last 3 years, President Trump has dramatically the opposite. Iran’s nuclear program is back on. Iran has re-started attacks against the United States. Iran is more influential in the region. Everything the President has done has worked to degrade our Nation’s safety and has worked to make Iran stronger.

The order to strike Soleimani has already been given, but what happens
next is not predetermined. My fear—my belief—is that last week’s killing of Qasem Soleimani will end up fitting into this pattern. But we have serious choices to make in this body, and we can choose to get off this path of escalation. I believe that correcting this President’s recklessness and keep America safe. I hope we step up to this challenge.

I yield the floor.

I support the presence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force, was killed by U.S. forces last week. That has already been well discussed and well understood. The falling regime in Iran has done everything it could to avoid his death and right now, to make the most of it, to make him a martyr to the cause of terrorism.

I think we should all understand that the cause of terrorism was his cause. He is not a general in any traditional sense of what that would mean. He has been described a number of different ways. He has been referred to as Iran’s top general. Don’t think for a minute that means anything like almost any other country’s top general.

One newspaper called him Iran’s “most revered military leader.” That might be true, but remember Iran’s purpose as a State is to encourage terrorism all over the world.

I have the news cast where he was referred to as “an irreplaceable figurehead...” though they went on to explain that he was a significant person. There apparently are no editors anymore because the term “figurehead” doesn’t mean what they were suggesting he was an irreplaceable figure. I hope that is. I think he is hard to replace, and I hope he is hard to replace. I would like to think in many ways he will not be able to be replaced, but that doesn’t mean he deserves our sympathy, respect, or our grief. I was, in fact, a bad person. He spent his career largely outside the boundaries of what any civilized nation would consider a military context. He led Iran’s terrorism agenda around the world.

Iran funded and provided weapons to the Shia militias in Iraq. They provided arms depots and military forces to the Assad regime in Syria. They supported Hezbollah terrorists in Lebanon. They provided advanced weapons to the Houthis rebels in Yemen. Hundreds of U.S. military personnel in Iraq were either killed or injured by the IED attacks encouraged and funded by Iran. That is what the Soleimani agenda was all about.

Over this past year, Iran has continued its campaign of aggression against the United States and our allies. In almost every report of these activities, Soleimani was one of the persons mentioned as, again, structuring, masterminding, encouraging, or taking credit for these things as they happened in some way. He shared responsibility in others for activities for which he and Iran were responsible.

Last June, Iran shot down a U.S. intelligence drone flying in international airspace, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps captured a British-flagged commercial vessel in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran was behind the attack on Saudi oilfields last September using drones and cruise missiles. Iran has been behind an attack on a Saudi airport used by civilians. The Quds Force also launched a crackdown on Iranian citizens who protested oil prices and are vigorously seeking out others who are complaining about the failing economy in Iran’s failing system.

Someone has already been named to replace Soleimani as the head of the Quds Force, but hopefully no one really can fully replace him.

I am not completely sympathetic to the idea that this action to eliminate this individual somehow came out of the blue. I think the President has been presented multiple times with this option as our first aggressive act, and we could do if we wanted to send the clearest possible message to Iran. The President was criticized last year because when going down the list of things I mentioned, he was hesitant to act—until last week. The same exact case as that in the past decided, after a year of thinking what would be the best response, that when the President did act it was suddenly a hasty action. They went from calling his actions hesitant to calling this hasty, looking for a way to criticize the President.

The President took this action after an American contractor was killed by forces associated with Iran and Soleimani, after the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad was attacked and weapons were used to get into the building.

There have been some suggestions that we shouldn’t have done this because we should be afraid of how Iran will react. We do have to be thinking about how Iran will react. We need to be thinking about what their next aggressive act might be. It would not be their first aggressive act, and I have already gone down a pretty long list that on the surface and upon of the aggressive acts Iran has committed up until the last few days.

We do have to be thinking about what is an appropriate response, but maybe it is now time for Iran to be thinking about our next response may be to their next aggression. The aggressive list is long, the response that the U.S. Government took was significant, but we can’t fail to act decisively just because it might upset our terrorist enemies. We can’t fail to act decisively just because it might upset the No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism, Iran.

Soleimani was not a high-ranking military official in any acceptable military structure. If your idea of a leading general is a general who leads in terrorist efforts, I think you have the wrong idea of what a military leader is supposed to do. Soleimani was not a high-ranking government official in any job that a responsible government would have. Soleimani was the mastermind of terrorist activities of the No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism in the world today. Soleimani has been behind it and hopefully will be impossible to fully replace.

I would say, in response to that decision, good job to the U.S. forces that executed the strike, and good job, Mr. President, in being willing to make the call. A bad person and a determined enemy of freedom and democracy in the United States of America has been eliminated. It is time for the Iranians to be thinking about what our next action might be instead of quietly and vigorously planning on what their next action might be.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IMPEACHMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, many of us here in the Senate thought we would be opening the new year with an impeachment trial, but that is not what is happening this week because the Senate is still waiting—waiting for Speaker PELOSI to actually send over the Articles of Impeachment.

Democrats rushed impeachment through the House, thrashing fairness and due process to the winds in their haste to impeach the President, but now they are apparently content to just sit on the Articles of Impeachment for the foreseeable future. If Democrats really believe that this impeachment is a serious matter, that there is literally a crime spree in progress, as they have claimed, they would have already sent over the articles. The truth is, Democrats’ impeachment efforts, which basically started before the President had even taken the oath of office, have been politically motivated from the start. Democrats thought they could damage the President politically by rushing to impeach him, and now they think they can damage the President politically by stalling a trial.

Speaker PELOSI is also attempting to force the Senate to conduct the trial she would like it to conduct in hopes of getting the outcome she would prefer—demonstrating once again the fundamentally political nature of the Democrats’ impeachment quest. Here in the Senate, we will continue working on the business of governing until...
the Speaker decides she is ready to stop playing games.

Mr. President, on Friday, we learned that Iranian General Qasem Soleimani had been killed in a U.S. airstrike. Iran’s terrorist activities throughout the Middle East are well known. Iran is a key backer of Hamas and Hezbollah and has fomented conflict throughout the entire Middle East—escalating sectarian conflict in Iraq, fueling civil war in Yemen, arming Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s brutal regime.

At the end of December, the Iran-backed militia Kataib Hezbollah, or KH, as they are called, fired more than 30 rockets at an Iraqi military base, killing an American contractor and wounding 4 U.S. troops. Days later, Iran-backed protesters stormed the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, conducting a 2-day siege of the Embassy before withdrawing before President Trump. The Senate will be briefed tomorrow, and I hope cooler heads will prevail in Iraq and that we can come to an agreement that upholds our mutual security interests and is beneficial to both the United States and to the people of Iraq. We have invested a lot in regional security efforts that we should see through. As we know all too well from the rise of ISIS, the consequences of leaving a power vacuum can be dire. I hope that power vacuum will not be resurrected as the US suspends counter-ISIS operations in order to defend our installations.

The world may enjoy a degree of closure with the killing of Qasem Soleimani. Citizens of the Middle East who suffered at the hands of Soleimani’s terror may have hope for a safer future, but this will require the Iranian regime to recognize the opportunity it now has to rid itself of Soleimani’s agenda and chart a new course. Iran’s leadership knows full well the consequences of maintaining its vendetta against America, our allies, and those who seek to live in peace and freedom. It got a preview of our military and intelligence capabilities last week. This is not a call for escalation but a frank acknowledgment that the United States will stand resolutely against those who threaten American lives.

While the initial reaction from Iran has not been positive, I hope General Soleimani’s death will encourage Iran to think carefully before it proceeds any further on its path of terror. I look forward to talking with the Defense Secretary, the CIA Director, and others tomorrow about what we need to do to minimize the threat of retaliation and to keep Americans and our allies safe. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll. The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF JOVITA CARRANZA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I am very happy that our first votes, not only of the session but of this decade, are going to be focused on supporting small businesses.

In America, we tend to speak about businesses with a sense of reverence that I think is absent in other countries, and there is good reason for that. So many of the great companies in this Nation started out as small businesses, and some of the greatest companies in America today are small businesses. We also have just under 60 million individuals who are employed by over 30 million small businesses throughout the country.

The Small Business Administration can play a very important role in our success and in the success of these businesses by providing entrepreneurs with technical assistance and access to capital, so it is critically important for the country.

Today, as we consider the nomination of Jovita Carranza to serve as the SBA Administrator, I thought it was an important point to make. There are some additional points I would like to make.

First of all, the position of Administrator is really crucial to ensuring that the agency is functioning well and is supported. It is also crucial that the Administrator be someone who is open to and supportive of the need to modernize the Small Business Administration and its many programs.

As we move into this new decade, it is more important than ever that the agency evolve to meet the unique and special needs of the entrepreneurs of today at a time in which we have ever-changing and increasing global and business climate adjustments that are occurring.

I think we sometimes forget that businesses today face a very different environment than we saw 10, 20, or 30 years ago. So as we are aware of these changes, it is important that, as policymakers, we have an obligation to identify the goals that achieve our national interests and that provide for our national defense, that create good jobs for American workers, and then that organize the laws that we propose and the reforms that we propose into those important items of national interest and how to achieve furthering them.

The last time the Small Business Administration was fully reauthorized was 20 years ago, in the year 2000, when just 42 percent of households, for example, had internet access. Nearly everyone was still using dial-up phones for access. It would be another 6 years before the iPhone even existed. Back in 2000, Americans bought fewer than 10,000 hybrid electric cars. From 2000 to 2020, those are the changes we have undergone, and that was the last time the SBA was reauthorized.

By the way, it also happens to be the year when China became a member of the World Trade Organization. I say that because, today, American small businesses—if you think our big businesses face unfair competition, imagine the unprecedented threat in competing against the Chinese Government and its Communist Party’s systematic use of state capitalism, its command and control, its large-scale subsidies for their own industries, and its sweeping obstruction of market access to its own country.
The challenges are extraordinary, and they require resources that allow our small business sector to compete against these conditions and to operate dynamically, to grow, to be innovative, and to be creative.

Small businesses need access to services and programs that better position them to support not just our Nation’s competitiveness on an international scale but particularly with regard to Beijing’s continued economic aggression toward our Nation.

Just as the SBA was critical in building the technologies and helping to spur the creation of the technologies that allowed us to be successful both in the space race and, ultimately, in the Cold War, I believe the SBA can play an important role in our efforts to compete with Chinese economic hostility.

In that regard, it is important to note that the status quo is just not enough. We need an agency that incorporates new and creative programs, that focuses on spurring investment, supporting advanced manufacturing, promoting innovation, and expanding our export opportunities.

It is important to note, as I said earlier with regard to the SBA’s role during the space race and the Cold War, that innovation breakthroughs we have often seen in our history have often been contingent on private-public collaboration, especially in the space programs that also happens to have a commercial obligation and also furthers our national security.

Small businesses and startups have historically always been essential to developing the technologies and the commercialization of products that often come out of those partnerships. But unlike what we have seen in Silicon Valley—startups that venture capital firms tend to gravitate toward over there—these technologies—the ones that are in our national interest, which I just spoke about—require significant time and resources to finance.

So on the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, we are going to continue to work toward a comprehensive reauthorization of the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act to achieve these ends that I have just outlined. But the leadership and the guidance of a forward-thinking SBA Administrator is going to be essential, not just to get it passed but to make sure that modernization works.

As the chairman of the committee, I am very eager to see the position of Administrator be filled. President Trump nominated Ms. Carranza to serve in this critical role back in August of last year. She has a long and successful career, having spent many years in both the private sector and government service.

She started her service at UPS. After 29 years, she served from there as vice president of air operations. Then she was nominated by President George W. Bush and was confirmed by this body—the Senate—to serve as SBA’s Deputy Administrator back in 2006. She served there for 2 years and then went back into the private sector until returning in June of 2017, when President Trump named her Treasurer of the United States.

Last month, the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee held a hearing to consider this nomination, and we voted favorably to report her nomination to the Senate floor.

In that hearing, Ms. Carranza made a commitment to work with Congress—to work with each of us—on the pressing issues that are facing the SBA and the program. She assured us—myself, ranking member, Senator CARDIN, and other members of the committee—that she would address the management challenges in the Office of Investment and Innovation to ensure the integrity of its programs but, most importantly, that she would appear before the committee after her confirmation to provide an update on how she is addressing these challenges.

She has committed to do other things that are important to assess the far-reaching rule governing the agency’s critical access to capital programs so that it is not restricting access to capital for small businesses; to be communicative and transparent with us on the subsidy models and calculations they are using for the Federal credit programs; to fill the backlog of staff that is needed to properly run the SBA’s innovation programs; to ensure that Federal grant dollars are being properly used—the dollars specifically associated with the entrepreneurial development programs to modernize the agency’s disaster loan programs; and to establish better controls to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. She also pledged to expeditiously establish a women-owned small business certification program and to provide responses to Congress on several of our past communications to the agency outlining proposals to aid small businesses against cyber threats, which is a critical threat facing many of the small businesses in this country today.

In the business meeting we had after the hearing, we considered her nomination. I was pleased to see that the overwhelming majority of our members on both sides of the aisle, including the ranking member, supported sending the nomination to the full Senate because there is a lot of work to be done. Restoring and expanding the SBA’s historic legacy of assisting businesses and meeting the international challenges at hand are very important and very crucial.

I look forward to working with Ms. Carranza to modernize our existing programs to meet the challenges we have before us and working toward solutions that ensure that small businesses have access to the resources they need to start, to grow, and to empower our Nation at large.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this nomination when we have a vote in a few minutes.
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.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:12 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m., and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. Capito).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Matthew H. Solomon, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, before Congress adjourned for the holidays, our colleagues in the House of Representatives carried out their sole priority for 2019, which was to impeach President Trump. That was their No. 1 objective in 2019. While it is no secret that this is something they have been dreaming of since the day President Trump was inaugurated on January 20, 2017, it certainly took our colleagues in the House on a roller coaster ride and the country as well. I liken it, really, not to a roller coaster ride, but to a three-ring circus. It did not reflect particularly well on their body or on the seriousness of the process.

From March of last year, here is an important quote to remember. Speaker Pelosi cast a lot of doubt that an impeachment vote would even happen. This is from March 2019. She said:

"Impeachment is so divisive to the country that unless there's something so compelling and overwhelming and bipartisan, I don't think we should go down that path, because it divides the country. And he's just not worth it."

That is what Speaker Pelosi said in March of 2019.

As we have seen, it was only a matter of time before the radical Members of her caucus forced Speaker Pelosi's hand and sent the House down a partisan impeachment rabbit hole. That is where they ended up. House Democrats dove head first into—as something our majority leader has said here in the Senate—the most rushed, least fair, and least thorough impeachment inquiry in American history. We have only been through this three times before in American history. This is an extraordinary undertaking under our Constitution, to seek to impeach and remove a President less than a year before the upcoming election over something that the House does not allege and the Senate has not found and that the President has not even close. They moved through closed door depositions, public hearings, and a vote at an alarming pace, all to ensure that they could wrap up the process by the end of the year. Before the clock struck midnight, they managed to get it done.

Despite Speaker Pelosi's insistence less than a year ago that impeachment should be a bipartisan process, the House passed Articles of Impeachment with votes from just one party, which is the definition of partisan, not bipartisan.

In spite of the partisanship that has ensnared this process in the House of Representatives, we in the Senate have vowed to follow the framework set by the only modern precedent for an impeachment trial in the Senate, and that is the impeachment of President Bill Clinton. In 1999, all 100 Senators, including both the current majority and minority leaders, voted in support of a pretrial resolution that laid the foundation for the trial ahead—this was in fairness to both sides and to the American people.

Well, of course, but witnesses come in different shapes, sizes, and form. There could be a live witness. There could be a witness's sworn testimony presented in a hearing or at a deposition outside of the Chamber and excerpts are read into evidence in the impeachment trial. This is not a question of whether we are going to have any witnesses or not. It is a question of how witnesses are presented. We in the Senate have been clear that this is something they have been dreaming about since the day President Trump was inaugurated, and everyone, every single one of our Democratic colleagues say the same thing. Pelosi vowed to follow the framework set by the President Clinton impeachment trial, every single one of our Democratic colleagues vowed in 1999 to do so. Now that a Republican President is on trial, instead of a Democrat, our Democratic colleagues say the same process is not good enough. In other words, what was good enough for President Clinton is not good enough, in their opinion, for President Trump.

Instead of following the exact same framework used in the Clinton impeachment trial, they want to set the rules as they go. They have even had a chance to hear the opening arguments. Here, again, I realize we have a lot of type-A personalities here—people who like to take charge—but that is not the role of the Senate during an impeachment trial. We are here to listen to the case presented by the impeachment managers from the House and the President's own lawyers, not to try to take over the process. In fact, the hardest thing a Senator is going to have to do during this impeachment trial is to sit and be quiet and let the parties present their case.

Well, our Democratic colleagues are even going so far as requesting specific
Nancy Pelosi has sent the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate. They obviously are having buyer's remorse about voting out Articles of Impeachment now and essentially admitting that the evidence is so slimy they indicated that nothing short of constitutional witnesses here in the Senate. Well, I am sure it comes as no surprise that Senate Republicans are not on board with this partisan approach to impeachment. As you can imagine, Nancy Pelosi isn't happy that the power to make this decision is in the Senate's hands. One thing I have learned here in the Senate and in the Congress is that the Senate and the House are pretty jealous about the prerogatives of their body to be able to make decisions for themselves. The last thing the House ordinarily wants to do is have the Senate tell them what to do. Certainly, the opposite is true. The last thing the Senate wants to do is have the House try to direct how the impeachment trial is conducted here in the Senate. Well, that is not the way it works, and that is not going to happen. Pelosi pulled the emergency brake on this rushed impeachment process and is refusing to send the Articles of Impeachment over here to the Senate because she doesn't think the framework used in the Clinton trial was good enough. She is now trying to use her role as Speaker of the House—admittedly, a very powerful position in our Congress—to try to make the rules of the Senate. She wants to set the parameters for what the Senate says they are going to do. Also, in her position, which is not in her job description, I know it is a terrible revelation, but it is beyond her authority, beyond her power, and it ain't going to happen.

The way I see it, this dogged determination to interfere in the Senate process isn't because the framework we are planning to use is unfair or partisan. Obviously, all the Democrats who were here during the Clinton trial agreed to a similar process then, and now they want to change the rules for President Trump.

Speaker Pelosi also wants the Senate to do the work that Members of her caucus were either too rushed or too lazy to do for themselves. Ordinarily, if the charges are going to be brought, let's say, in a criminal case, there would be an indictment, and then the case would be presented. It would rise or fall based on the presentation of the prosecution.

Well, here, I think the analogy is apt that it is the responsibility of the House to prove the Articles of Impeachment that they have charged. It is their responsibility, not ours. We are supposed to be the jury.

Speaker Pelosi knows, as we do, that the House did not do a good job in investigating the facts, and she thinks the Senate should mop up after the House created the mess that they did. That is not going to happen.

The House had ample opportunity and time to look at all the facts. The problem the House has is that the facts they have discovered and alleged simply don't represent a high crime and misdemeanor, much less bribery or treason, which are the constitutional standards for an impeachment. What they did was conduct with a President whom they hate. That is the reason they have impeached President Trump. It is not because of any bribery, treason, or high crimes.

As a matter of fact, they don't even charge a crime. What they do is charge obstruction of Congress.

Here is what happened. Adam Schiff, the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, issued subpoenas to certain witnesses. The White House said: Hey, wait a minute. We believe we have a valid claim of executive privilege. Ordinarily, that would then go to a court, and the court would say yes or no or cut the testimony. But when the witnesses said we need to go to court for direction, Adam Schiff dropped them like a hot potato and didn't even bother to call the witnesses. Why? Because the testimony he said was important. Now, that is on him. That is not on President Trump. To claim that their own mismanagement of the impeachment inquiry is grounds to impeach the President for obstruction of Congress would be laughable if it weren't so serious.

At their own volition, they rushed through the impeachment inquiry with reckless abandon, and it is not the Senate's job to reopen and redo their inglorious investigation.

The Senate's role, as I said, is to take the evidence compiled by the House and presented by the impeachment managers and conduct a trial based on the evidence that they present, not to somehow initiate a new investigation before we have even heard from the impeachment managers from the House, or to somehow say: Well, we are going to essentially become the impeachment managers ourselves, a role that the Constitution gives to the House and not to the Senate.

The Senate's role is to listen and decide, not to try to hijack the process and try to do something for the House that they have been unable to do themselves. Once the Speaker transmits the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate, the House's role as a body is done, and they speak and act through the impeachment managers, who will be presenting the case on behalf of the House.

When the Speaker decides to send the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate, they do it as part of their job. And, unlike the House, we will do so in a serious and deliberative fashion and perform our constitutional duties under the Constitution and the rules of the Senate with regard to impeachment trials.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.
Consider Russia. Even as our intelligence community and bipartisan congressional reports point to “incontrovertible” proof of Russia’s interference in our 2016 elections and plans to do so this year in 2020, to this day, the President’s own fragile ego still prevents him from even acknowledging the threat, let alone standing up to continued Russian aggression.

Turn to North Korea. Two years ago, the President said that he had achieved a breakthrough that would allow the US and North Korea to walk together down a path to peace. Instead, he has now shuttered the door to diplomacy. The President has isolated the US, and North Korea, and Japan and walked away from serious sanctions enforcement.

Nearby in China, the administration’s efforts have failed to change China’s actions in the South China Sea, resolved territorial issues at play in our trade relationship, or address its worsening human rights and governance behavior—from the crackdown in Hong Kong, to the oppression of the Uighurs, to China’s growing economic and military power, used to spy and oppress.

Turning to the Western Hemisphere, a year ago, the President rightly denounced Maduro but misleadingly declared the success of his Venezuela policy today. The President sits silently as millions of Venezuelans fleeing a massive humanitarian crisis and the hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans already in the United States remain in desperate need of temporary protected status.

President Trump says he wants to confront the root causes of migration. He says he wants to combat drug trafficking and the opioid epidemic. Yet he has repeatedly weakened our counter-narcotics, law enforcement, and development operations in the Northern Triangle and Mexico, while continuing to push for a border wall he promised the American people Mexico would pay for.

The administration’s abhorrent treatment of refugees has always brought to our economy and our communities.

We also face immense challenges like climate change. Yet, even as our close ally Australia faces the most deadly conflagration, this administration continues to deny a threat that is already costing American taxpayers billions of dollars in the wake of increasingly severe storms, fires, and floods. Without backing from the Paris climate agreement will result in abdication of American leadership, one that has allowed China—yes, China—to position itself as the world leader on clean energy.

The Trump administration has also ceded ground at the United Nations to China and Russia. Recently, China beat us out for a leadership seat at the Food and Agriculture Organization, while Russia won out support for its cyber crime treaty.

While the administration may seek to explain away these losses on an individual basis, this is, in fact, the steady drip, drip, drip of the loss of American power and influence due to President Trump’s abject mismanagement. Turn to South Korea, Japan, and India, and we see how the US is no longer a partner in the region. We lack a shared vision, let alone a shared strategy. America’s moral standard. Likewise, the Trump administration has also ceded ground at the United Nations to China and Russia. Recently, China beat us out for a leadership seat at the Food and Agriculture Organization, while Russia won out support for its cyber crime treaty.

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Despite what the President may say, Iran is not a different country than it was 2 years ago. Iranian-backed protesters just stormed our Embassy. Previously, they were storming Iranian Embassies. The Iraqi people were storming Iranian Embassies at the behest of Iran’s forces in Iraq. Now they are out massively protesting against us.

A regime that continues to oppress its own people and its proxies now has a solidified populous behind it. Soleimani ultimately is, is that what he could not achieve in life, he may well have very well could have achieved in death—pushing the United States out of Iraq.

It is no secret that I did not support the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, but let’s be clear: Today, Iran is closer to a nuclear breakout than when President Trump took office, and we have isolated ourselves from the international alliance that we have built to constrain Iran’s aggression.

Meanwhile, in Syria, the President’s greenlight for Turkey’s incursion has weakened American interest in the region, allowed Russia to grow its influence, and opened the door for ISIS to reconstitute.

By turning our backs on the Kurds, we signaled to the world that we will abandon our allies on the battlefield. And while the President promised to stop endless wars in the Middle East, over the weekend, thousands of military family members are unexpectedly seeing goodbye as their loved ones receive orders to do just the opposite.

President Trump has not brought the American people more peaceful, a more stable, and a more prosperous world. On the contrary, the President has brought us closer to war, closer to facing a nuclear-armed Iran, closer to facing an existential threat to Israel, and closer to witnessing a destabilizing arms race and greater conflict in the entire Middle East region, fueled by emboldened Iranian proxy forces.

A show of strength with no strategy in place is no show of strength at all. President Trump spent the better part of 3 years on the golf course, eviscerating the clear lines between a President’s responsibilities to the American people and his devotion to his own wallet. The President and his family continue to put their business interests over America’s interests.

The President has flouted the Constitution’s emoluments clause and shredded decades of ethical norms by refusing to separate himself from the Trump Organization. He and his family maintain unprecedented business interests in real estate projects in about 20 foreign countries that undoubtedly entangle him with foreign governments when cooperation of financing is needed. It is clear that that creates a conflict that does not put the Nation’s interests first.

He operates with no moral compass. Indeed, the President’s pursuit of his own personal profit at the expense of America’s national security interests in Ukraine led to his impeachment by the House of Representatives.

I urge my colleagues to remember why America’s conduct on the world stage matters, why our values matter, and why our leadership matters.

We strive to create a more peaceful and a more stable world so that we can protect the security of Americans at home, that we can create greater prosperity and economic opportunity for our people, and, at the end of the day, avoid at all costs a need to send our sons and daughters to war.

Every President faces many threats that challenge our quest for this brighter future. We have worked hard to create institutions and provide resources to help every administration navigate this increasingly complex world. We pray that the moral character of every President provides them with the foresight and judgment necessary to protect American security and our strategic interests when it matters the most. Instead, President Trump has taken difficult security challenges and turned them even harder to resolve. That is why Congress’s role in shaping and advancing U.S. foreign policy has never mattered more. That is why I will continue to advance strategic legislation from Turkey to climate change to Congress’s support to conduct oversight, and to speak on behalf of the American people and the values and norms that define us and our place in this complicated world.

Here in the Senate, we have an obligation. We cannot cynically look the other way or embrace the doctrine that which we know to be wrong, risky, and morally reprehensible. History will not judge us kindly if we do. I, for one, will not stand idly by and be judged that way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today following the U.S. airstrike in Iraq, the airstrike that killed Iran’s terrorist mastermind.

I fully support President Trump’s decision. As Commander in Chief, I believe he had an obligation to do what he did to act when American lives were at stake. With the death of Iran’s General Soleimani, the American people and people around the world are much safer.

This general was an emboldened, blood-thirsty terrorist. He was a killer. He has the blood of countless people around the world on his hands.

In the last 2 months, we have seen 11 attacks—11 attacks—on U.S. forces and bases, including the killing of an American citizen.

He became bolder and more aggressive in both his actions and his ambitions, and he was stepping up his attacks on Americans. In fact, General Soleimani was at war with the United States his entire career, and it was a military career. He was the commander of Iran’s terrorist network.

In recent months, we watched as he personally directed brazen attacks on our Embassy and our personnel in Iraq. We knew that more attacks were coming, so the United States took action.

Soleimani’s death makes America safer in the long run. Taking out this war criminal will help us avoid war in the future.

Let me be clear: I don’t want war with Iran. The United States does not want war with Iran, but we know that appeasement does not work. The Obama administration’s strategy of wishful thinking failed.

Soleimani’s terrorist network was made more powerful by U.S. money. The Obama administration gave billions of dollars as part of that Iran nuclear deal. What did they do with the money? They used the money to support terrorists around the world. Without a doubt, appeasement brought only failure. It made Iran stronger, and it hurt the United States and our allies.

We know that the winning strategy is peace through strength. We knew it through Ronald Reagan, and we know it today. Already sanctions on Iran have been crushing and crippling.

We must continue President Trump’s maximum-pressure campaign. Now Iran knows the United States means what it says. We are prepared for retaliations, should they come.

This past weekend, Joe Biden actually said that Iran is in the driver’s seat. Iran is not in the driver’s seat; Iran is in the center of the bull’s-eye. U.S. forces will respond. We will respond to any future attacks on Americans or Americans’ safety, and we will do it swiftly and with a punishing response.

It will be a grave mistake for Iran to further escalate tensions. Instead, what Iran ought to do is dial down its aggressive nature and posture.

The facts are these: General Soleimani was a blood-thirty terrorist. He had the blood of civilians on his hands, and he would have killed many more if given the chance.

This general spent his entire career at war with the United States. He was responsible for the deaths of American soldiers—hundreds of deaths with IEDs—and for the maiming of American soldiers with roadside bombs.

Thousands of Americans have been permanently disabled because of him.

Thankfully, the general’s 20-year reign of terror has now ended, and there is broad condemnation all around the world over the mass destruction and the death that he caused. It is now time for Iran to take a step back, away from nuclear weapons, away from terrorism, away from aggressions, and to come to the table. It is time for them to discuss peace.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. Kaine. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. KAINÉ. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the War Powers Resolution that I filed on Friday, January 3, with Senator DURBIN.

I spoke yesterday at some length about the painful history of relations between Iran and the United States and the escalating tensions in the last 3 years that have brought us to the brink and stand at the brink, with military actions by Iran and the United States causing battlefield casualties on the other side, I believe that it is imperative for Congress to reassert itself and make plain that no President should have the ability to take the Nation to war on his or her own.

Let me talk about the Constitution and about the value judgment underlying the allocation of war powers in the Constitution and then the resolution that is now pending, having been filed in the Senate.

First, on the Constitution, the Constitution as drafted in 1787 has a series of provisions. Some are somewhat vague rights, what is an unreasonable search? Some are extremely precise. You have to be 35 years old to be President. If you look at the Constitution, you can see a variety of provisions, some more specific and some a little more open-ended.

Actually, the war powers part of the Constitution—though not completely without ambiguity—is one of the clearest parts of the Constitution. In article I, the power to declare war is given to Congress, not to the President and not to the Judiciary—to Congress.

In article II, the President is declared to be the Commander in Chief of the military. If you read the constitutional debates at the time, what emerges is a fairly clear understanding by those who were at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia that was both clear but also quite unusual. The understanding was that for a war to start, Congress should vote for it to be initiated, but then, once started, the last thing you would need is 535 commanders in chief. So once Congress had voted to start a war, at that point the prosecution of the war becomes for the President and the military command, not for the micromanaged by 535 Members of Congress.

This was fairly clear, and it was very unusual. It was very unusual because at that point in history, in 1787, war and the declaration of war was not primarily legislative. It was for the executive. It was for the King, for the Monarch, for the Pope, for the Emperor, or for the Sultan. War had been, throughout history, an executive function, not a legislative function. But the Framers of the Constitution and the constitutional plan that they were really trying to change human history, at least in so far as the United States went. Then, in this country, the initiation of war would be done by Congress.

Why was it done that way? Well, we have the virtue of a Virginian who was not only one of the drafters of the Constitution but who kept notes of the Constitutional Convention. And then he wrote letters about what he intended. Ten years after the Constitution was written in 1787, James Madison wrote a letter to Thomas Jefferson and directly addressed why it is that for the Constitution to do something for Congress. He said this: "The Constitution supposes, what the History of all Governments demonstrates, that the Executive is the branch of power most interested in war, and most prone to it." For this reason, we have "with studied care, vested the question of war in the Legislature."

They recognized that Executives were prone to war, and they wanted the legislature to have sign off on the initiation of war. It was unusual then, and it is unreasonable search. Some are extremely precise. You have to be 35 years old to be President. If you look at the Constitution, you can see a variety of provisions, some more specific and some a little more open-ended.

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puts U.S. troops into hostilities without a congressional authorization—
even if the President claims a legal right to do so—self-defense, article II power—but if the President puts U.S. troops into hostilities without a congressional authorization, any Member of Congress can file a resolution to remove the U.S. troops from hostilities and force a vote on that resolution within a prompt period of time. That is the resolution Senator DURBIN and I filed last Friday.

President Trump has engaged the United States in hostilities with Iran. People have different points of view about whether that is a good thing or bad thing, but now that there are battlefield casualties on both the U.S. and Iranian sides, it is clear that this provision of the statute has been met. We are engaged in hostilities with Iran. Not only are the United States and Iran engaged in hostilities that have inflicted casualties on the other side, but the United States today is essentially recognizing that we are in hostilities because he is sending War Powers notices to Congress—one in November and one last Saturday—reporting on his actions and saying that the reports are consistent with the War Powers Act. He recognizes that hostilities are underway.

The current hostilities are not pursuant to a previously passed congressional authorization. The 2001 authorization for use of military force authorized military action against the perpetrators of the 9/11 attack. Iran was not a perpetrator of the 9/11 attack, and there is no argument that they are covered by that authorization. There was a separate authorization passed by Congress in 2002. That is the most recent one that has been passed. It authorized action to topple the Iraqi Government of Saddam Hussein. That government is long gone, and that authorization does not permit attacks on Iran or only on Iran leadership, as well as the individuals who were killed in the two sets of U.S. strikes. With these two threshold questions met, hostilities are underway as defined by the War Powers Act, and they are not subject to a previous congressional authorization.

We have now filed a resolution to get Congress to reassert its constitutional role. The resolution demands that U.S. forces be withdrawn from hostilities against Iran unless Congress affirmatively passes a declaration of war or authorization, or the United States needs to defend itself from an imminent attack.

If my resolution passes, Congress would still have the ability to pass an authorization, if it chose to, and the United States would still be able to defend itself against imminent attack, but the President could not act on his own to start a war with Iran except in those circumstances.

The resolution does not require that U.S. troops withdraw from the region. We are doing many things in the region. Thousands of Americans are there partnering in missions that increase the security of the United States and our allies. There is no requirement that we withdraw from the region. These missions include security cooperation with partner forces, fighting and dismantling elements of al-Qaeda, ISIS, and the Taliban, and ensuring the safe passage of commercial vehicles through freedom of navigation operations. All those activities that are being conducted by the United States in the region.

The resolution does not hold those forces into question or question their mission.

The only thing the resolution would accomplish, if passed, is to back the U.S. troops away from engagement and hostilities with Iran unless for imminent defense or pursuant to a separate authorization.

I would hope to have the support of all my colleagues on this resolution. It is primarily to preserve the option of U.S. military action for self-defense. It would preserve the ability of Congress to declare war or pass a war authorization. It would only prohibit this President or any President from taking us to war on his own.

I heard one colleague say: “The last thing America needs is 535 Commanders in Chief.” I completely agree. Once Congress authorizes a war, it should be up to the Commander in Chief and the military leadership to wage that war and make the tactical decisions about how to fight it, but the question of whether we should be at war at all is one that is specifically left to Congress.

Let me finish by again focusing on our troops. So many members of the military were home for the holidays, enjoying time with their families, and then received surprise notices that they must redeploy to the Middle East yet again. Imagine the cost of two decades of war on those troops and their families. Some of these folks have deployed over and over and over again. Imagine being at home at Christmas and receiving the notice you have to deploy yet again to the Middle East.

We are living in a challenging time. Many Americans know nothing but permanent war. We have been at war since 2001. There are Americans, including Americans in the military, that has been their whole life. That is all they know. Yet, at the same time, many Americans know nothing about war. Because we have an all-volunteer service, many American families are completely untouched by the war. Only 1 percent of our adult population serves in the military.

We have an interesting dynamic that may be sort of unique to our history, whether we have been at war for 20 years and some only know permanent war, while many other American families know nothing about war because members of their families don’t serve in the military.

We put war on a footing where it can go on forever, sort of like on “Executive Autopilot” by Presidential order, and Congress, in my view—and, again, this is bipartisan—has hidden from its responsibilities.

At this moment of very grave danger, where both Americans and Iranians are losing their lives in hostilities, it is time for Congress to shoulder the burden of making the most important decision we will ever face. That is why I want to bring this resolution to the floor of the Senate and ask my colleagues to debate and vote on it in the coming weeks.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. CON. RES. 32

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, Members of the Senate, I rise first to express my grave concern over the actions and words that have brought us to the brink of an unauthorized war with Iran.

Today I am introducing a resolution with Senator WARREN and Senators LIEBERMAN and BUCKEY and WYDEN, because, on Saturday, President Trump tweeted that his administration is targeting 52 sites, some of which are cultural sites treasured by the Iranian people.

My resolution is very simple. It says that attacks on cultural sites in Iran are war crimes. It is as straightforward as that.

The President would compound the mistake he has made and turn it into an unnecessary escalation which ignores international law and the Defense Department’s own policies. Attacking cultural sites is a violation of international law. Article 33 of protocol 1 to the Geneva Conventions prohibits any act of hostility against cultural objects, including making cultural sites the target of reprisals.

The 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which has been ratified by this body, also prohibits the attack or destruction of cultural sites.

Attacking cultural sites would also violate the Defense Department’s own policies. The Department of Defense Law of War Manual states that cultural property, the areas immediately
surrounding it, and appliances in use for its protection should be safeguarded and respected.

The fact that President Trump’s threatened attacks of cultural sites in Iran violate international law and Department of Defense policies may be why, last weekend, Secretary Esper stated that the United States decided to “follow[s] the laws of armed conflict.”

Well, the U.S. Senate then should speak clearly with one voice to tell President Trump it does not condone attacks on cultural sites in Iran. Given Secretary Esper’s comments yesterday, I cannot see why my friends on the other side of the aisle would not support this resolution to make that statement very clear and to make it now before Iran potentially retaliates against us, and the President begins to select the targets inside of Iran.

Attacking cultural sites is what ISIS does. It is what al-Qaida does. It is what the world’s most heinous terrorists do. There is no excuse for the President to threaten war crimes by intentionally targeting the cultural sites of another country. This is not who we are. We are the United States of America. We are better than this. We actually fight against this. We condemn ISIS. We condemn others who destroy the culturally sacred objects in other countries.

Just a few years ago, in 2017, the Trump administration itself opposed and condemned the unlawful destruction of cultural heritage at the hands of ISIS. As a top U.S. official to the United Nations, U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the U.N. Michele Sison said on the President’s behalf:

The unlawful destruction or trafficking of cultural heritage is deplorable. We unequivocally oppose it and we will take all feasible steps to halt, limit, and to discourage it.

Now the President himself is threatening to engage in exactly these sorts of illegal and reprehensible attacks on Iran.

The United States had a choice to make during World War II because our military kept putting Japan’s ancient capital Kyoto back on the target list for the atomic bomb. Kyoto is home to more than 2,000 Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, including 17 world heritage sites.

It was Secretary of War Henry Stimson who went directly to President Truman to argue that Kyoto should be removed from the target list for the atomic bomb. Kyoto is home to more than 2,000 Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, including 17 world heritage sites.

Imagine the outcry the American people would have if our symbols of cultural heritage were destroyed—the Statue of Liberty destroyed; Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were drafted; destroyed; the memorials along the National Mall destroyed. These places house and embody our collective history and the culture of the United States of America.

The assassination of General Soleimani was a massive, deliberate, and demonic act of conflict with Iran. What conditions prompt us to go to war? The U.S. Constitution and the War Powers Act leave little ambiguity. The Congress, not the President, has the power to make or authorize the war. The Congress has the authority to determine when and how we go to war.

We cannot and must not get drawn into a costly war with Iran. We need to deescalate now. But President Trump’s statement—attacking cultural sites in Iran only aligns us with the world’s most sinister and draws us further along the path to war.

Some might say: Well, Secretary of Defense Esper says that President Trump’s tweet at 5:52 p.m. on Saturday evening. Here is what he said: “targeted 52 Iranian sites . . . some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture, and some of them they will never even know—WHICH WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD.” That was by the President of the United States just Saturday night at 5:52 p.m., and we are supposed to be assured by Secretary of Defense Esper that we don’t have to worry.

Well, here is what we have learned in just the last couple of days. The generals were stunned. The generals were shocked that President Trump ordered the assassination of Soleimani. So we can’t depend upon the representations of Secretary Esper.

We have to make a statement ourselves because no one in his administration controls Donald Trump. If he says that he is going to target the most valuable cultural sites inside Iran, we should believe him. He does what he says he is going to do. He wanted to kill Soleimani. Even if the generals were shocked, he did it.

He doesn’t understand the long-term consequences of his perspective, just get over it. Well, if we sow the wind, we are going to reap the whirlwind in Iran.

If the President decides to take the next step after Iran retaliates—and they say that they are—and these sacred cultural sites are not the list, then, taking Secretary Stimson’s advice from World War II, our ability to ever reconcile may be impossible.

This is the moment that we have to speak loudly. And we do not know how much time will elapse before Iran strikes back at us, as they have promised. We should make our statement right now to Donald Trump in the Oval Office that we do not want him under any circumstances to order the destruction of the most sacred cultural sites inside Iran. It would be a war crime. It would be a violation of the Geneva Convention. It would be a violation of the Hague Convention. It would be a mistake of historic proportions and a war crime. Do not order a war crime to be conducted in the name of the American people.

So the resolution that I bring to the floor is intended to have this body vote unanimously for him not to take that action. This is our moment to speak before he compounds his original mistake—the assassination of General Soleimani—and turns it into a tragedy, which we will have to live with for a generation.

Madam President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 32 submitted earlier today. I further ask that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Oklahoma. Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I sit here
Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the current resolution be referred to the appropriate committee.

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

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, just in response from Oklahoma, it is deeply disheartening when, on the floor of the U.S. Senate, we cannot agree to a simple commitment that the United States of America should never engage in military actions that are war crimes by attacking cultural sites in Iran when ISIS attacks cultural sites in the Middle East, we condemn that because we know what the impact on the cultures of those countries will be. When al-Qaida attacked us on September 11, 2001, the United States of America should never engage in military actions that are war crimes by attacking cultural sites in Iran.

When ISIS attacks cultural sites in the Middle East, we condemn that because we know what the impact on the cultures of those countries will be. When al-Qaida attacked us on September 11, 2001, the United States of America should never engage in military actions that are war crimes by attacking cultural sites in Iran.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, 5 days ago, President Trump made the boldest defensive policy decision of his Presidency to date. He authorized the airstrike against the leader of Iran’s Quds Force, Soleimani, in accordance with his authorities as Commander in Chief of the United States under article II of the Constitution. Let’s remember who Soleimani was. He was a terrorist. He was responsible for training and funding militias across the Middle East—the very militias that have targeted American personnel, our facilities, and our partners for decades. He was behind the plot to assassinate John F. Kennedy in Dallas. He was behind the plot to assassinate Louis Armstrong years ago on January 6, 1999, and I am quoting from it:

Cultural property is protected from intentional attacks so long as it is not being used for military purposes or otherwise may be regarded as a military objective. Hence may subject such property to attack.

That is a direct quote.

To be clear, I am not saying that we should target cultural sites, but we certainly should not restrict our military ability to defend itself with rogue actors appropriating cultural sites for attacks or strategic reasons. The use of a cultural site to construct IEDs, launch missiles, or give snipers carte blanche against our forces is not accounted for in this resolution.

I therefore object to this resolution on those grounds and hope that the resolution will be amended to acknowledge an exception for when cultural sites are used for staging military attacks or other improper purposes.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I yield to Senator Inhofe.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I am just asking, are we in a period of morning business? The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are not.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of the remarks of my friend from Massachusetts, I be recognized for such time as I shall consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, the current resolution be referred to the appropriate committee.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, 5 days ago, President Trump made the boldest defensive policy decision of his Presidency to date. He authorized the airstrike against the leader of Iran’s Quds Force, Soleimani, in accordance with his authorities as Commander in Chief of the United States under article II of the Constitution.

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I therefore object to this resolution on those grounds and hope that the resolution will be amended to acknowledge an exception for when cultural sites are used for staging military attacks or other improper purposes.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I request a parliamentary inquiry.
We hear a lot recently about getting—I am very happy this President was able to put together something and take out al-Baghdadi, but this guy was worse than al-Baghdadi—you can argue, even worse than bin Laden.

The President for criticizing the President for killing a terrorist who wanted to destroy America—stated it many times—they think it was reckless and represents a rush to war. Nothing could be further from the truth. Just remember how we got where we are today.

Remember the Obama apology tour? I remember it well. When he first came into office, he went around talking about—all around to our adversaries and our friends alike talking about how bad America was. We remember that, and it was a game changer for our behavior throughout the world at that time.

First, America’s credibility took an all-time low to the Obama administration. President Obama set a redline in Syria. We all remember that redline in Syria. That was because Syria was using weapons of mass destruction, and President Obama said: If you continue to do that, we will, you know, take you out—effect. Well, when the redline occurred when Syria started dropping weapons of mass destruction on its own people there. Now, that kind of, I think, changed the thinking of does America mean what they say?

To make matters worse, Obama signed a deal with Iran that didn’t address Iran’s support for terrorism at all. It gave Iran over $100 billion, including $1.7 billion in cash. That was a John Kerry thing. That was when John Kerry was the Secretary of State and President Obama was the President. At that time, $1.7 billion was given to this terrorist group in small bills, in foreign currency, for obvious reasons—you don’t have to stop and think that through—but then, in addition, over $100 billion, and they even admitted at that time that that could be used to expand terrorist activities.

One of the quotes in 2016—and I wrote it down, and I have used it many times since then—I want you to listen to this. This is a quote from John Kerry in 2016. He said: “I think that some of it will end up in the hands of the IRGC or other entities, some of which are labeled terrorists.” John Kerry also said: “You make matters worse, Obama, going to sit here and tell you that every component of that can be prevented.”

So is it any wonder that Iran’s regional aggression has only gotten bolder and bolder? Look what has happened just in the last few months. In May of this year, the Iranians attacked oil tankers with land mines. We know about that. In June, they shot down a U.S. drone. It is a U.S. drone. By the way, the type of that was classified for a while. It is not classified anymore. It was in excess of $100 million. That is what they did. What did our President do? He sat back, and it didn’t cause him to get all excited. He handled it in a very diplomatic way. Then, in September, they attacked the Saudi oilfields, taking some 50 percent of Saudi Arabia’s oil production capability offline. He responded by increasing pressure on Iran—ramping up economic sanctions and increasing their diplomatic isolation but not anything that would suggest getting into any type of violence.

The President avoided military action while setting a very clear redline. And what was the redline? He said: So long as you don’t kill an American—if you kill an American, we are going to come after you. That is the redline. That is a redline that 95 percent of the people in America agree with.

On December 27, Iran crossed that redline. Soleimani directed the attack that killed an American and wounded four other Americans. President Trump made it clear that there were consequences for spilling American blood. He said: You kill an American, we are going to come after you. And he did.

Iran never believed there would be consequences. After all, Obama never enforced his redline, and even President Trump was hesitant to use military force. Only a day before the strike that killed Soleimani, Iran’s Supreme Leader—In fact, you have to read this. This is a tweet that came from him to the President: “That guy has tweeted that we see Iran responsible for the events in Baghdad & we will respond to Iran. 1st: You can’t do anything.” This is a guy telling our President “You can’t do anything.” That is a quote. That whole thing is a quote that came from him. They never believed there would be consequences, but there were consequences.

Only a day before the strike, he said: “You can’t do anything.” We are talking about Iran’s Supreme Leader tweeting to our President of the United States “You can’t do anything.” Obviously, they know better than that. Well, President Trump could, and he did. He actually restored America’s credibility around the world. He showed that we mean what we say.

You tell me what is reckless—they talk about the President who means what he says and takes the protection of American lives seriously or the fringe Democrats who want to tie the President’s hands and deny him the tools to uphold his constitutional responsibility to defend our citizens?

You know, right now before this Senate, there is a resolution—not the one my friend from Massachusetts was talking about but another one that would take away some of the President’s powers of negotiation. We are talking about powers that are there as a result of article II of the Constitution. That is what our President has—those constitutional powers. Yet the President did not use military force until they crossed the redline, and that is not a rush to war.

Listen to folks like former Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman. I served with him, served with Joe Lieberman. He is a Democrat. I have one of the quotes that he said just recently in analyzing this. I don’t recall, but I think he was here probably about 25 years. This is a quote from Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman, a former Senator: “President Trump took our President Qasem Soleimani was morally, constitutionally and strategically correct. It deserves more bipartisan support than the begrudging or negative reactions it has received thus far from my fellow Democrats.

That is a quote.

We have another one from about the same timeframe, just recently. Listen to Obama’s Secretary of Homeland Security. I got to know him. His name is Jeh Johnson. He was one who was eminently qualified for that position and did a good job while he was there. This is what he said about the action with Soleimani, which the President is being accused of doing terrible things about. This is from the Secretary of Homeland Security under President Obama. Jeh Johnson said:

He was a lawful military objective, and the president, under his constitutional authority as commander in chief, had ample domestic legal authority to take him out without an additional congressional authorization.

Whether he was a terrorist or a general in a military objective. The Congress, and the House in particular, which is being hearing right now what is going to happen. Are the articles going to come over? I think a lot of her far-left friends are saying: Yeah, let’s go over there and let’s continue this thing. Let’s continue beating up the President. But she also has a bunch of her liberal friends who are saying: Look, the polls don’t look too good. People are onto this. They realize that there is a problem. Maybe we shouldn’t be sending them at all.

We will find out tomorrow. I understand there’s some big Democratic meeting. I am not invited. There is one over in the House. They are going to make a determination, and we will all find out at that time what is going to happen to the Articles of Impeachment.

Again, Soleimani was a lawful military objective—one that President Trump took out under article II authority. More to the point, nobody is
talking about war. Nobody is calling for an invasion. Nobody is calling for a ramp-up. We all know what that looks like here, and it is very plainly not what is happening. An airstrike is not war. Defending American lives is not war. The President has made it clear that he does not desire war, which is why he has continued to call for negotiations with Iran to end the standoff, and that is the very thing some people are trying to take away from him. It is not just a constitutional right; it is a constitutional responsibility.

Nobody here wants war, but at the same time, nobody should want a policy that would leave Americans vulnerable to the whims of Iran’s terrorist-supporting regime. If we do that, if we tie the President’s hands so that he cannot defend American lives, we leave ourselves more vulnerable and therefore make war imminently more likely. That would be reckless.

I would just be anxious for this time period to pass so we don’t have to be facing this on a daily basis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Cassidy). The Senator from Arkansas.

The 75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize members of the Greatest Generation who courageously helped to defeat the German Army at the Battle of the Bulge and who dealt a critical blow to the Nazi regime.

On this day 75 years ago, American soldiers continued the resilience they had demonstrated for 4 weeks. On December 16, 1944, in the Ardennes Forest of the Luxembourg and Belgium area, American soldiers were unexpectedly attacked by the Germans. Allied forces were unprepared. They were outnumbered and facing record-low temperatures and dwindling supplies, but, still, the men on the frontlines dug in to defend against the enemy.

Arkansan Bill Strauss was one of the brave men who faced the bitter cold and dire conditions. With lack of sleep and shortage of food, he and his fellow troops endured this extreme test of will and resolve.

I met with Bill in 2019 to help him celebrate his 100th birthday and thanked him for his service and continued commitment to sharing his experiences with others. It has been 75 years, but Bill of the Oneida Nation and the unimaginable circumstances he faced was still very clear. He talks about his memories as part of the Battle of the Bulge in order to honor his fellow soldiers who weren’t so fortunate, as well as to teach succeeding generations about the realities of war and the remarkable perseverance of American troops.

The 6-week battle demonstrated the commitment, courage, and resilience of Bill and all the American soldiers. It was the last battle ever fought by the U.S. Army. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill called it “the greatest American battle of the war.” It came at a considerable cost. More than 89,000 American soldiers were casualties, including 19,000 soldiers who were killed, 47,500 who were wounded, and 23,000 who were captured or missing in action.

The people of Belgium and Luxembourg have a close place in their hearts for American soldiers who sacrificed their lives on foreign soil. They continue to display that gratitude today.

A couple of weeks ago, I led a group of my fellow Senators to both countries to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. We experienced how the town of Bastogne, Belgium, observes this anniversary. The tremendous community support was welcoming of American veterans whom fate had brought together in 1944 in the town and in the nearby forest to defend Bastogne and hold off the German advance.

I was honored to visit with American veterans who fought in the battle and were returning to the land they had defended. There are fewer and fewer who are able to join, but that doesn’t diminish what they did there or the steadfast will and sacrifice in the name of freedom.

My colleagues and I also had the unique opportunity to witness the ceremony by the 101st Airborne Division among the foxholes in Belgium. These foxholes, once occupied by soldiers, including those from Easy Company, the heroes immortalized in the celebrated “The Band of Brothers” book and miniseries, remain preserved. They stand as a stark reminder of the bitter cold and inhospitable conditions our soldiers withstood for so many days. This solemn ceremony was a special way to remember those who had fought and to honor those whose lives were taken too early.

Following World War II, the Belgian people raised money to build a memorial to show their appreciation for the selfless sacrifice of Americans troops. The Mardasson Memorial was dedicated in 1950. The star-shaped structure commemorates the battle, paying tribute to the units that fought there and representing the States where those wounded or whose lives were lost hailed from.

This memorial is in need of repairs. That is why I support legislation that Senator Tillis introduced that would let experts at the American Battle Monuments Commission oversee its restoration.

Maintaining this memorial is critical to making sure what the monument stands for: the service and the sacrifices made by Americans at the Battle of the Bulge, and that will continue to be passed on to future generations to come. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill so future generations can reflect on the heroism and bravery of our troops.

We can be proud of the unwavering bravery of the American servicemembers and the Allied forces whose efforts defeated the German attack and led to the end of the Nazi regime.

It is fitting that we recognize the 75th anniversary of a battle that both shaped the future of combat and ushered in a new year of comity between Europe and the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, first, I thank the Senator from Arkansas for his wonderful remarks. We had a similar event in Rhode Island with veterans of the Battle of the Bulge who recounted their stories and who were celebrated by our State leaders, our adjutant general, and a crowd of admirers. It was a wonderful moment and a wonderful memory. So I thank him for calling it up on the Senate floor.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. President, here we are in 2020, and I am still coming to the floor to try to wake this Chamber up to the perils of climate change—pathetic.

Why do I have to be doing another one of these speeches? But we heed the warnings of our foremost scientists, of our military, of top financial institutions—heck, of our own home State universities? What does it take to get our attention around here?

Is it the fossil fuel industry’s unlimited dark money still flooding our politics? Why are the biggest lobbying forces in Washington, like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, rated as America’s worst climate obstructors? Where are those trade group members who claim to support climate action when their own groups are leading the obstruction? What is going on?

Who around here is so cynical as to still take fossil fuel money and block climate action? In 2020, how is that a legitimate deal?

Who hasn’t noticed the world spinning toward climate catastrophe—the forests burning, the seas rising, the ocean water acidifying, the glaciers melting? How can you miss that? To the liars, the deniers, the conmen, and the stooges, I predict 2020 is going to be a bad year for you. The sand beneath your castle of lies is eroding fast. Now, 2019 was a tough year for you, and 2020 will be worse. We are going to bring down your castle of lies.

The fossil fuel industry campaign of obstruction hides behind an armada of phony front groups. In 2020, we will out you and your fossil fuel funding, too. The pollsters and the pollsters, like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, rated as America’s worst climate obstructor, and all of the other groups that are those trade group members who want progress, while still using that dark money still flooding our politics?

What does it take to wake this Chamber up to the persisting peril of climate change? In 2020, how is that a legitimate deal?

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The fossil fuel industry’s biggest schemers against climate action in Congress are the big corporate trade associations. The worst two are the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. They are not just behind that evil little head popping up in Washington. The watchdog InfluenceMap outsourced NAM and the chamber in a virtual tie as the two most obstructive forces on climate change in America. That is some prize.

The chamber works its evil in legislation, coal regulatory action, in courts, in elections, even fighting State-level progress on carbon pollution.

The chamber funded the phony denier think tank at the Heritage Foundation used to disparage the Paris Agreement. The chamber stoozed for the fossil fuel industry for years and got away with it, but 2019 saw an end to that. My colleagues and I took to social media, to op-ed pages, and to the Senate floor to out the chamber for its disgraceful record on climate change. We pushed on chamber members to demand change within the organization. We countered the chamber with amicus briefs in court, against its dirty history, when its evil little head popped up in climate lawsuits.

Senator Warren and I lodged a complaint with the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate over the chamber’s refusal to disclose who is behind its lobbying activities—disclosures, by the way, required by law.

Senators even got hashtag “ChamberOfCarbon” trending on Twitter. I made a little yearender visit to the chamber to make, for no charge, a little correction to their sign out front, so that it says “Welcome to the U.S. Chamber of Carbon.” So we have been after them.

By year’s end, there were signs of discomfort over at the chamber. Up popped a post on its website that said that on climate “inaction is not an option. Hell, for years, inaction had been the purpose. Now they say it is not an option.”

The chamber formed a new internal climate change working group. The “Chamber of Carbon” even quietly posted that it reversed itself on the Paris Agreement and now was for staying in—OK, baby steps but in the right direction.

I think the chamber and NAM became America’s two worst climate obstructors when they were paid $700 million by fossil fuel dark money, and in 2020 I intend to find that out. If the chamber is still taking fossil fuel money, it is hard to take those baby steps very seriously. They are probably just PR to placate the chamber members who are embarrassed that their organization got caught and outed as a top climate obstructer.

For that prize, by the way, chamber members have a lot to be embarrassed about. Allstate, MetLife, IBM, FedEx, Bayer, Ford Motor, United Airlines, Delta, American—they all funded and directed a top climate obstructer.

Really? Did they know it? Did they know the chamber—their own organization—was secretly getting fossil fuel money to become a top climate obstructer?

If they did know, by God, they have a lot of explaining to do. If they did not know, what standard of governance makes it OK for a board member to not even know who is funding your organization? So, look out, board members. We are not letting that go either. The year 2020 is when we intend to get to the bottom of this nasty mess.

The real test for the chamber—not baby steps—will be whether it puts its back into passing a real comprehensive climate bill. Will the chamber stop scheming with climate denial organizations? Will the chamber stop opposing climate action candidates? Those are the tests. This, by the way, is not a PR test. It is not a PR test of how little you can get away with. This is a science test. It is a science test of how will the world keep below 1.5 degrees Celsius, global warming. If we fail the science test, how well we did on the PR test is going to look pretty silly.

Help us meet that 1.5 degrees Celsius. We will be talking, gladly. I look forward to working with you. Until then, expect the pressure on you to rise in 2020.

We called out one other miscreant in 2019: Marathon Petroleum. This gasoline refiner orchestrated the Trump attack on fuel economy standards for automobiles. As I laid out in testimony in a House Oversight Subcommittee hearing last year, Marathon pressured Members of Congress, Governors, and the Trump administration. The corrupt Trump administration was only too eager to oblige, issuing an error-riddled proposal to freeze the fuel economy standards.

The Trump administration went after California’s authority under the Clean Air Act to set fuel economy standards. Trump’s DOJ cooked up a bogus anti-trust investigation, I believe, to punish the automakers that had worked with California to hammer out a separate deal on fuel economy standards that defeated Marathon’s scheme.

It looks like the Trump administration also pressured automakers to support the administration’s legal battle with California, and 2020 is the year I hope we expose all this.

In 2020, I started noticing Marathon’s bad behavior on climate. In fact, in September, 200 investors with $6.5 trillion in assets under management sent a letter to 47 U.S. companies, including Marathon, to urge those companies to align their lobbying with the Paris Agreement 2 degrees Celsius climate goal and to warn that their lobbying against that goal is an investment risk.

Well, the four biggest shareholders in Marathon are BlackRock, JPMorgan, State Street, and Vanguard. They claim to care about climate. We will see, in 2020, if they keep conjuring all this Marathon misbehavior.

Happily, there are some things the crooked fossil fuel industry apparatus can’t stop. Even with its massive subsidy for fossil fuel, renewables are starting to win on price. New green energy technologies are powering up, like wind and solar.

Electric vehicles are driving cost down and performance up for consumers. Old coal plants are closing—546 since 2010. New coal plants are unfinanceable, and 2019 saw Murray Energy become the largest coal company to file for bankruptcy and the biggest drop in coal consumption ever.

Another trend the industry couldn’t stop was economists, central bankers, Wall Street, real estate professionals, and asset managers waking up to the crash risks that climate change poses to the global economy. It is not just that it is wrecking our atmosphere and oceans and climate. Our economy stands on those pillars, and at some point there will be real economic crashes.

Climate crash warnings used to be scarce. Now they are everywhere. Fredd Mac warns that rising sea levels will prompt a crash in coastal property values worse than the housing crash that caused the 2008 financial crisis.

First Street Foundation found that rising seas have already resulted in $16 billion in lost property values in coastal homes from Maine to Mississippi.

Moody’s warns that climate risk will trigger downgrades in coastal communities’ bond ratings. BlackRock estimated that, by the end of the century, climate change will cause US communities annual losses that could average up to 15 percent of local GDP—average up to 15 percent of local GDP—with the hardest hit communities hit far worse. Look out, Florida. By the way, Louisiana is not too far from Florida.

The Bank of England, the Bank of France, the Bank of Canada, and the European Central Bank—backed by top-tier, peer-reviewed economic partners—are all warning that economic risk—“systemic economic risk” is economist-speak for risk to the entire economy—from stranded fossil fuel assets, the so-called carbon asset bubble. On top of that, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission here in the United States has launched a climate risk review. Even the Trump Fed is starting to echo those warnings with reports out of local Federal Reserve bank branches.

It is not just big institutions that are grasping the risks of climate change. I visited Louisiana, Wyoming, and Colorado last year to hear about climate change and see what red- and purple-state Americans are doing about it. The answer is: plenty.

In Louisiana, sea level rise and subsidence are megathreats. I met a hunter and fisherman whose personal efforts to restore marshland have allowed his local delta wetlands to re-bound from mismanagement. A scientist with the National Wildlife Federation counted over 30 species of birds
just while we were standing around waiting to board the boat.

The sights and sounds of a healthy marsh were an encouraging reminder of nature’s ability to find a way to not only survive but to flourish if we give her a chance.

In Wyoming—well, don't get me wrong—climate change isn't always a popular subject. The State is basically run by the fossil fuel industry, but there's a younger generation that really gets it. I will not forget the determination of leading winter sports athletes in Jackson fighting to preserve their winters; nor, in Lander, the impassioned argument for climate action from a young outdoor instructor from NOLS, National Outdoor Leadership School; nor, out at their campsite, the fire-lit, passionate faces of Central Wyoming College students on their way up to take glacier measurements, who well understand the stakes of climate change for their future and the future of the State they love.

Typically, these climate road trips that I do land me in States where the fight for climate change may need a little more, the opposite was true in Colorado. It is a State on a major climate winning streak: a State of good climate bills passed during the last legislative session; their biggest public utility transitioning to renewable energy, building impressive renewable energy and electric vehicle infrastructure; and leading research institutes bringing new renewable energy technologies to the marketplace.

The bill clerk read as follows:

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the nominations with no objection, it is so ordered.

**LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the nominations with no objection, it is so ordered.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 554.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Paul J. Ray, of Tennessee, to be Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget.

**CLOTURE MOTION**

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

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

**CLOTURE MOTION**

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Paul J. Ray, of Tennessee, to be Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, James M. Inhofe, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, Todd Young, Shelley Moore Capito, Michael B. Enzi, Lisa Murkowski, John Cornyn, Steve Daines, Lindsey Graham, Chuck Grassley, Josh Hawley, Roger F. Wicker, Marsha Blackburn.

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

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

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

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

Ms. HARRIS. Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 416 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 465, Anuraag Singhal, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

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Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 416 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 465, Anuraag Singhal, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.
Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I wish to recognize the service of the USS Pittsburgh and her crew for our country since the ship’s commissioning on November 23, 1985.

A Los Angeles-class, fast-attack nuclear submarine, the Pittsburgh served for 35 years as an anti-submarine, strike, and anti-surface ship warfare vessel that also specialized in surveillance and reconnaissance. The Pittsburgh began Operation Desert Storm in 1991 and again during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2002, conducting Tomahawk missile strikes in both campaigns. While most of the vessel’s missions remain classified, the Pittsburgh logged over 1,000 dives all over the world, including in the Arctic, Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific oceans.

The Pittsburgh was the U.S. Navy’s fourth ship to be named after the Steel City and during its time in service retained a number of connections to its namesake. Dozens of civic organizations have used the ship for outreach efforts, fundraisers, and crew visits to increase the public’s appreciation for the Navy and the submarine service. Local groups, such as the Pittsburgh Council of the Navy League and the Leetsdale, PA, chapter of the U.S. Submarine Veterans Incorporated, have kept in regular contact with the ship’s crew. Another local organization, the Pittsburgh Foundation, even administers a scholarship fund for the Pittsburgh’s crew and their families.

The vessel’s motto, “Heart of Steel,” paid homage to the city’s cultural and industrial roots. The slogan is apt given that the reactor at the Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory in West Mifflin, PA, just outside of Pittsburgh, are credited with designing portions of the nuclear technology outfitted on nuclear-propelled Navy vessels, including the Pittsburgh.

On February 25, 2019, the submarine completed her final deployment, during which she traveled over 39,000 nautical miles and conducted three foreign port visits. Subsequently, the Pittsburgh departed Groton, CT, for Bremerton, WA, for her final homeport change. On this final voyage, she became the first submarine of her variant to complete an arctic transit. She is now undergoing the months-long decommissioning and inactivation process, and will culminate in a ceremony on January 17, 2020. I send everyone involved in the ceremony the best of wishes.

After 35 years of distinguished service, I commend the USS Pittsburgh and her crew for their sustained commitment to upholding our Nation’s defense. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognition of the USS Pittsburgh upon her inactivation from the Navy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING DAVID BLEE

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I wish to commemorate the life of David Blee, who tragically passed away on December 29, 2019, at the age of 66. David was the founder and president of the United States Nuclear Industry Council, USNIC. During his long and distinguished career in the nuclear industry, David concentrated on nuclear supply chain and reactor technology and actively worked to increase support for nuclear power in the United States and abroad. David also worked with the National Laboratories, including Idaho National Laboratory, often running conferences in conjunction with them. At the passing, David held an appointment to the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Civil Nuclear Trade Advisory Committee, CINTAC, an achievement that spoke to his incredible expertise.

David graduated from Dickinson College in Pennsylvania with a degree in economics, but he soon began working in politics and public service. After managing several political campaigns, David became chief of staff to then Representative Connie Mack while Mack served in the House of Representatives. David then served as a Deputy Assistant Secretary and, later, Director of Public Affairs for the U.S. Department of Energy during the Reagan administration. He also managed the executive vice president for NAC International, a U.S.-based energy services and technology company, where he directed the company’s worldwide consulting group and marketing and business development portfolios.

One of David’s greatest attributes was his ability to work with people and bring organizations together. Composed of over 80 companies, USNIC represents the “who’s who” of the nuclear energy supply chain, including technology developers, fuel cycle companies, and others that demonstrate the importance of maintaining the nuclear industry. These companies working in conjunction would not have been possible without the great effort of David Blee. In July of last year, I was honored to be presented with the U.S. Nuclear Energy Distinguished Leadership Award by USNIC. The coalition of groups attending that award ceremony had I been present, I would have voted yes on rollcall vote No. 422 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 383, Robert J. Colville, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I wish to recognize the service of the USS Pittsburgh and her crew for our country since the ship’s commissioning on November 23, 1985.

A Los Angeles-class, fast-attack nuclear submarine, the Pittsburgh served for 35 years as an anti-submarine, strike, and anti-surface ship warfare vessel that also specialized in surveillance and reconnaissance. The Pittsburgh began Operation Desert Storm in 1991 and again during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2002, conducting Tomahawk missile strikes in both campaigns. While most of the vessel’s missions remain classified, the Pittsburgh logged over 1,000 dives all over the world, including in the Arctic, Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific oceans.

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After 35 years of distinguished service, I commend the USS Pittsburgh and her crew for their sustained commitment to upholding our Nation’s defense. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognition of the USS Pittsburgh upon her inactivation from the Navy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING ROBERT L. “RED” MCKINNEY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I rise today with a heavy heart to pay tribute to Robert “Red” McKinney, an outstanding friend and public servant. Sadly, Mr. McKinney passed away on December 22, 2019, at the age of 72. He will be remembered for his devotion to East Hampton and his bright, loving nature.

Born in Hartford, CT, Red spent his entire life in East Hampton. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Mitchell College and a bachelor’s degree from Central Connecticut State University. Red spent five decades as a chemical specialist, focused in metal working fluids. For 40 years, he and his wife, Anne, co-owned a commercial and residential property acquisition and management company, HTA, LLC.

Outside of his work, Red dedicated himself to supporting his community. Giving back to those around him brought Red an unparalleled joy, dating back to his role as a member of East Hampton Parks and Recreation in the 1970s. He was the youngest member of the East Hampton Board of Selectmen ever elected and proudly served for 4 years. Notably, Red also served as chairman of the East Hampton Democratic Town Committee for 10 years and remained a member for his entire life since 1974.

That same year, he joined the East Hampton Rotary Club, making him the longest tenured member. His impressive level of involvement is also evident through his over four-decade-long role as a charter member of the Old Hampton Days Association. The association coordinates the annual East Hampton Old Home Day parade—a signature celebratory tradition attended by hundreds of people. As a regular participant in the parade, I saw firsthand the professionalism and dedication that Red brought to that event. He was always a joy to talk with.

Red was especially pleased to have the opportunity to celebrate the people
of his town and surrounding communities. He treated the residents of East Hampton the same way he valued his close friends and family.

Through his active role in these organizations and many others, including the Middle Haddam Library and Middlesex Hospital, Red positively impacted countless members of his community. His commitment to supporting those around him was recognized through three Paul Harris Fellow Awards from other Rotary Clubs.

Red’s remarkable legacy of service is an inspiration to all of us and sets a model of service that will continue in East Hampton for years to come.

My wife, Cynthia, and I extend our deepest sympathies to Red’s family during this difficult time, particularly to his wife, Anne, along with their children and grandchildren. May their many wonderful memories of Red provide them solace and comfort.

RECOGNIZING POCATELLO ELECTRIC

Mr. RISCH. Madam 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. Today I am pleased to honor Pocatello Electric located in Pocatello as the Idaho Small Business of the Month for January 2020.

Max Schaefer opened Pocatello Electric in 1947 and eventually bought the business to Red Hall in the 1980s. The business became well known for its “free air and water at the curb,” which meant air for automobiles and water for horses. Al Vigliaturo began working at Pocatello Electric in 1947 and eventually bought the business from Hall in 1973. Vigliaturo’s son and daughter-in-law, Mike and Suzie Vigliaturo, bought the business in 1989 and continue to run daily operations.

Pocatello Electric offers a wide range of home appliances, accessory items, and mattresses for purchase in its 7,500-square-foot showroom in historic Old Town Pocatello. For more than 117 years, the business has remained committed to providing exceptional customer service. Employees assess the needs of each customer to ensure buy- ers select products that will fit their unique needs. The delivery team provides delivery and installation, and the service team provides continued service and repairs for all products purchased in-store. Pocatello Electric has received the Idaho State Journal’s Readers’ Choice Award for best service three times, the Pocatello and Beyond award 2004 and its best customer service award 3 years in a row. The business recently hosted a No Child Hungry event, which brought the Pocatello community together to pack 10,000 meals that were delivered to local food banks, homeless shelters, and soup kitchens.

Congratulations to Mike Vigliaturo and all of the employees at Pocatello Electric for being selected as the Idaho Small Business of the Month for January 2020. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.

RECOGNIZING DELICATE PERIODONTICS AND IMPLANT DENTISTRY

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I highlight a small business that exemplifies the value of dignified work and the unique entrepreneurial spirit of our Nation. It is my privilege to recognize a Florida small business that is dedicated to its patients, as well as the surrounding community.

Today, I am proud to honor Delicate Periodontics and Implant Dentistry of Wellington, FL, as the Senate Small Business of the Month for January 2020.

Founded in 2017 by owner Dr. J’Nelle Delica, Delicate Periodontics and Implant Dentistry is a friendly, welcoming dental practice that provides quality dental care with a specialization in laser periodontics. A first-generation Jamaican-American and native Floridian, Dr. Delica dreamed of opening a dental practice since she was 13. Years later, Dr. Delica has achieved her dream and has dedicated her career to treating patients and educating individuals on dental health. In addition to services such as exams and cleanings, Delicate Periodontics provides surgical and laser periodontal therapy, bone grafts, dental implants, and sinus lifts. With the help of her staff, Dr. Delica ensures that each patient receives personalized attention. When faced with large and complicated cases, Dr. Delica ensures that the process remains collaborative so patients feel at ease.

Delicate Periodontics is also involved in giving back to the community through events like health fairs where Dr. Delica provides dental screenings for Palm Beach County residents. The dental practice has also been a dedicated sponsor for events in the Wellington community such as the Meet Me at the Race Sunset Stride Family 5K. Additionally, Dr. Delica has dedicated much of her time to educating local middle and high school students about careers in dentistry as part of an annual health symposium.

Dr. Delica’s passion for educating others on the importance of dental health has extended far beyond the walls of Delicate Periodontics. As a student, Dr. Delica partnered with the Jamaican Ministry of Health to educate families on dental health in early childhood. After earning her dental degree at Dentistry, Dr. Delica maintained her relationship with Jamaica and currently serves as an adjunct faculty member at the University of West Indies Dental School. In recent years, Dr. Delica has brought her dental expertise to Saint Ann, Jamaica, where she and other health professionals volunteer their dentistry skills for patients in need.

Dr. Delica and her team’s dedication to quality dental services and community service, both in the United States and abroad, makes Delicate Periodontics and Implant Dentistry an integral member of the South Florida economy. I urge all colleagues to shop with them at Delicate Periodontics and Implant Dentistry. I look forward to watching your continued growth and success.

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–3589. A communication from the Acting Principal Director, Defense Pricing and Contracting, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Review of Defense Solicitations by Procurement Center Representatives” (DOD Case 2019-DO08) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020, to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3590. A communication from the Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Annual Report on the Truth in Lending Act, the Electronic Fund Transfer Act, and the Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disputes Act, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020, to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3591. A communication from the Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Annual Report of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on College Credit Card Agreements, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020, to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3592. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People’s Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3593. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Belarus that was declared in Executive Order 13405 of June 16, 2006; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3594. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of a national emergency declared in Executive Order 13222 with respect to the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3595. A communication from the Program Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulatory Capital Treatment for High Volatility Commercial Real Estate Lending” (FRB Docket 5001) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019, to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3596. A communication from the Counsel, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Home Mortgage Disclosure (Regulation C) Adjustment to Asset-Size Exemption Threshold” (FRB Docket 5002) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to
the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3597. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulatory Capital Treatment for High Volatility Commercial Real Estate (HVCRE) Exposure” (FRL No. 10009–20–OECA) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3598. A communication from the Acting General Counsel of the National Credit Union Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Delay of Effective Date of the Risk-Based Capital Rules” (RIN3313–AF01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3599. A communication from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Risk Mitigation Technology for Unsecured Credit-Based Swaps” (RIN3235–AL83) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3600. A communication from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of a rule entitled “Rule Amendments and Guidance Addressing Cross-Border Application of Certain Security-Based Swap Requirements” (RIN3235–AM13) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3601. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the designation as an emergency requirement all funding so designated by the Congress in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, pursuant to section 251 (b) (2) (A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, for the enclosed list of accounts; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC–3602. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the designation for Overseas Contingency Operations and Services for Periods of Fiscal Year 2019 (including the rescission of funds) and contributions from foreign governments so designated by the Congress in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, pursuant to section 251 (b) (2) (A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, for the enclosed list of accounts; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC–3603. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report related to the Colorado River Basin Reservoirs Act of 1982, for inclusion in the Annual Report to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–3604. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for the Army, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “The Innovative Materials and Advanced Technologies Report”; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3605. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Extension of Photochemical Assessment Warning System (PAWS) Requirements through June 30, 2021” (FRL No. 10006–57–OECA) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 23, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3606. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Risk Mitigation Techniques Report” (FRL No. 10000–52–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 23, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3607. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Tennessee; Approval of Plan for Control of Emissions from Commercial and Industrial Solid Waste Incineration Units” (FRL No. 9997–01–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3608. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “2020 Annual Adjustment: Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment” (FRL No. 10003–77–OECA) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3609. 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; Yolo-Solano Air Quality Control Agency Kaschke Source Permits” (FRL No. 10002–05–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3610. 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; Indiana; Limited Maintenance of Motor Vehicle Emissions Standards; NAAQS; Evansville, Fort Wayne, Greene County, Jackson County, Muncie, and Terre Haute areas” (FRL No. 10003–54–Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3611. 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; South Carolina; Interstate Transport for the 2008 8-hour Ozone NAAQS” (FRL No. 10005–56–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3612. 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; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2013 8-hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards” (FRL No. 10005–80–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3613. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Alabama; Approval of Plan for Control of Emissions from Commercial and Industrial Solid Waste Incineration Units” (FRL No. 9996–80–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3614. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Idaho; Final Approval of State Underground Storage Tank Program Revisions, Codification and Incorporation by Reference” (FRL No. 10003–28–Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3615. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Protection of Stratospheric Ozone; Adjustments to the Allowance System for Controlling HCFC Production and Import, 2020–2029; and Other Updates” (FRL No. 10003–76–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3616. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a consoliated budget justification display that includes all programs and activities of the Department of Defense combating terrorism pursuant to section 19–1534; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3617. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (P.L. 107–243) and the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 1991 (P.L. 102–1) for the September 10, 2019 to November 9, 2019 reporting period; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3618. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in the U.S. Agency for International Development, and authority for all programs authorized by the Arms Export Control Act, for the 2020 calendar year; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3619. A communication from the Executive Secretary, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3620. A communication from the Chair, Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a letter entitled “Overview of Indicators for Mental Health and Substance Use, including ‘Improving Outcomes for Mental Health and Substance Use’, to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3621. A communication from the Director of the Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Order and Proposed Order and Further Order issued by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration: Notice of Inquiry Regarding the National Security and Economic Benefits of Developing a National 987–OAR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3622. A communication from the Director of the Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Revision of Rules to Implement the Cybersecurity Act of 2015; Proposed Rule” (FRL No. 10004–58–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3623. A communication from the Director of the Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “National Telecommunications and Information Administration; Notice of Inquiry Regarding the National Security and Economic Benefits of Developing a National Maritime Security Technology Program, 2020” (FRL No. 10004–10–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.
Western Balkans that was declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3648. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Criteria for Preparation and Evaluation of Radiological Emergency Response Plans and Preparedness in Support of Nuclear Power Plants” (NRC-2012-0026) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 3, 2020; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3649. 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 “Opening of the third six-year remedial amendment cycle for pre-approved defined benefit plans” (Rev. Proc. 2020-10 (R-P-172366-19)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 20, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-175. A petition from a citizen of the State of Delaware relative to the Delaware Constitution; to the Committee on Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

Report to accompany S. 2714, a bill to amend the America COMPETES Act to reauthorize the ARPA-E program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-195).

Report to accompany S. 2596, a bill to amend the Federal Power Act to provide energy cybersecurity investment incentives, to establish a grant and technical assistance program for cybersecurity investments, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-196).

Report to accompany S. 2657, a bill to support innovation in advanced geothermal research and development, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-197).

Report to accompany S. 2799, a bill to require the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of the Interior to establish a joint Nexus of Energy and Water Sustainability Office, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-198).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. ROMNEY, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 315. A bill to amend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 to allow counties to use certain funds to provide or expand access to broadband telecommunications services and other technologies; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. SCHAFITZ):

S. 3152. A bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to incorporate data on maternal health outcomes into its broadband health maps; 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. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. REED, Mr. BUCKEY, Mr. WYDEN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. Con. Res. 32. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that attacks on cultural sites are war crimes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 283

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 283, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to, and utilization of, bone mass measurement benefits under part B of the Medicare program by establishing a minimum payment amount under such part for bone mass measurement.

S. 460

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 460, a bill to amend title XVI of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for employer-provided education assistance to employer payments of student loans.

S. 505

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) 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. 525

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 525, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 685

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 685, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 relative to the powers of the Department of Justice Inspector General.

S. 839

At the request of Mr. KAIN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 839, a bill to extend Federal Pell Grant eligibility of certain short-term programs.

S. 1074

At the request of Mr. SCHAFITZ, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1074, a bill to reinstate Federal Pell Grant eligibility for individuals incarcerated in Federal and State penal institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 1577

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1577, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide authority to postpone certain deadlines by reason of State declared disasters or emergencies.

S. 1764

At the request of Mr. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1764, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to ensure just and reasonable charges for telephone and advanced communications services in the correctional and detention facilities.

S. 1820

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) 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. 1908

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

S. 1918

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1918, a bill to amend the Richard B.

S.1920
Russell National School Lunch Act to require alternative options for summer food service program delivery.

S. 2054

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a co-sponsor of S. 2054, a bill to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Glen Doherty, Tyrone Woods, J. Christopher Stevens, and Sean Smith, in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

S. 2321

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2321, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint a coin in commemoration of the founding of Negro Leagues baseball.

S. 2546

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIROKOWA) 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. 2715

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 2715, a bill to develop and implement policies to advance early childhood development, to provide assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries, and for other purposes.

S. 2748

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2748, a bill to repeal the section of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 that requires the Federal Communications Commission to regulate and auction the T-Band spectrum.

S. 2761

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2761, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide that children who have relocated from Puerto Rico to the States are fully considered for purposes of State allotments under the English Language Acquisition grants.

S. 2941

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2941, a bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a consumer recycling education and outreach grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 2998

At the request of Mr. BURNT, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2998, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that payment of taxes on deferred foreign income in installments shall not prevent credit or refund of overpayments or increase estimated taxes.

S. 3072

At the request of Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3072, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prohibit investigational use exemptions for abortion drugs, and to impose additional regulatory requirements with respect to previously approved abortion drugs, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 63

At the request of Mr. KAINES, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLISBAND), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIROKOWA), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VALENTINO), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 63, a joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities against the Islamic Republic of Iran that have not been authorized by Congress.

S. RES. 40

At the request of Mr. JONES, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 410, a resolution establishing a McCain-Mansfield Fellowship Program in the Senate.

S. RES. 463

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) and the Senator from Georgia (Mrs. LOEFLE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 463, a resolution amending the Rules of Procedure and Practice in the Senate When Sitting on Impeachment Trials.

S. CON. RES. 32

At the request of Mr. KINE, I ask unanimous consent that floor privileges be granted for the first 6 months of this calendar year for a list of interns in my office.

S. J. RES. 63

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That attacks on cultural sites are war crimes.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I have 2 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:

Select Committee on Finance

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

Select Committee on Intelligence

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that floor privileges be granted for the first 6 months of this calendar year for a list of interns in my office.

The interns on that list are: Aileen Murphy, Rilind Abazi, Parker Baird, Julia Cortina, Shanelle Jones, Chris O’Brien, and Megan Brown.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Garrett Beer, a defense fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges throughout the remainder of this Congress.

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

Mr. KAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that floor privileges be granted to J.C. Jain, a State
Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, January 8: 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, and morning business be closed; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Solomon nomination, under the previous order.

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

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2020

Mr. MCCONNELL, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, January 8: 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, and morning business be closed; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Solomon nomination, under the previous order.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL, Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator Brown.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, 3½ years or so ago, I live in Cleveland, and I was in my State watching the Presidential campaign. I heard Candidate Trump repeatedly talking about renegotiating NAFTA or getting rid of the North America Free Trade Agreement. While I did not support his candidacy and have generally disagreed with most of what he has said and done, it was a bit of music to my ears to hear Candidate Trump talk about renegotiating or getting rid of NAFTA.

I have voted, in my time in the Senate and before this, every single trade agreement starting with the North America Free Trade Agreement of two-plus decades ago. I have voted no in these trade agreements. I never voted for a trade agreement because, frankly, every trade agreement coming in front of the House or Senate has been a corporate trade agreement. It has been written by corporate lobbyists to serve corporate interests to serve their biggest stockholders. That is what these trade agreements are about. In every case, it was an attack on the middle class. In every case, it undermined worker protections. It depressed wages. It meant lost jobs.

I know what these corporate trade agreements did to my hometown of Mansfield. I know what it did in Mansfield, OH. I know what they have done to my adopted city of Cleveland, OH, and I know what they have done to the entire industrial Midwest—well beyond that, too, in places like Arizona and elsewhere. I have seen what these corporate trade deals do.

So Candidate Trump is elected President. He thought he is going to do away, back out, or renegotiate NAFTA. I looked at that with optimism. I talked to the U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Lighthizer, a number of times. I spoke with the President about it. I appealed to him. I said, listen, 10 and 10, about a year ago, the President came out with a renegotiated NAFTA. It was the same old, same old. It was another corporate trade agreement that served his corporate interests, that undermined workers, that gave incentives to companies to shut down production in the U.S. and move to Mexico, that gave them tax holidays, that undermined workers, that allowed companies, and that served those companies that are looking for cheap labor across the Rio Grande River.

Under the President’s new NAFTA—he called it USMCA—United States-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement—under the President’s new NAFTA, it was the same corporate template, the same corporate trade agreement that helps corporate investors, that undermines workers, that gives incentives to companies to attract investment in Zanesville, in Gallipolis, in Marietta, in Cleveland, in Lima, in Toledo, and in Bryan and move their jobs to Mexico.

So what did we do? Instead, initially, I continued to talk to the U.S. Trade Representative, as did some of my colleagues, knowing this first NAFTA draft was unacceptable and was not nearly what the President said he would do for workers. In fact, it was more than that. It was another betrayal of workers. The President has betrayed low-income workers by refusing to raise the minimum wage. It has been more than a decade. This same President took away the new overtime rule, costing at least 50,000 Ohioans—that is just 50,000 in my State, thousands in Arizona, probably 100,000 in California, tens of thousands around the country and different States—cost them their overtime pay, meaning they would work 50 hours a week, and they would only get paid for 40. We saw what the President again was betraying workers.

It has taken us months and months and months of fighting alongside Speaker PELOSI and Senator WYDEN—the senior Democrat of the Finance Committee—and unions and organized labor to secure the Brown-Wyden provisions that now, with USMCA, amount to the strongest labor enforcement in a U.S. trade agreement ever.

It means that wages will go up in Mexico, which is good news for American workers because fewer jobs will move to Mexico. A worker in Mexico now will be able to report a company that violates her labor rights or worker rights. Within months, we can determine whether worker rights have been violated and can take action against that company.

Now, for the first time in my whole career, I will vote for a trade agreement. I wouldn’t have voted for the Trump trade. I didn’t vote for NAFTA, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, PNTR with China and South Korea, and all these other trade agreements. I would not have voted against the Trump USMCA because it didn’t look out for workers.

Instead of putting workers at the center of trade agreements, which is what we should do, it was a trade agreement written by and for corporate interests. What Senator WYDEN and I did and others is we are now about to pass a trade agreement that puts workers in the center of the trade agreement, meaning a stronger middle class and meaning workers will get a fair shake. It means that Ohio workers will be able to compete.

We know why companies took advantage of these corporate trade agreements. They shut down production in Ohio and moved to Mexico so they can pay lower wages and they can take advantage of workers who have no rights. American workers can’t compete with that when it is a race to the bottom on wages. Brown-Wyden will work to stop that, and for the first time ever, as I said, it will put workers in the center of a trade agreement.

We must be straight with American workers. This isn’t a perfect trade agreement. One trade deal the Democrats fixed—even though the President resisted it, finally gave in—a trade deal that Democrats fixed will not undo the rest of Trump’s economic policies that puts corporations over workers and appoints judges who put their thumbs on the scales of justice to support corporations over workers and to support Wall Street over consumers. I voted yes. I voted yes today in the Finance Committee. It is the first time I ever have on a trade deal because, by including Brown-Wyden, Democrats have made this trade agreement worker-friendly.

And, equally as important, we set an important precedent that Brown-Wyden must be included in every future trade agreement that comes in front of this body.

I yield the floor.
ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:05 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, January 8, 2020, at 10 a.m.

DISCHARGED NOMINATION

The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs was discharged from further consideration of the following nomination under the authority of the order of the Senate of 01/07/2009 and the nomination was placed on the Executive Calendar:

*PETER J. CONIGLIO, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, EXPORT-IMPORT BANK.

*Nominee has committed to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate January 7, 2020:

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

JOVITA CARRANZA, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.
COMMENDING NAVY QUARTERBACK MALCOLM PERRY ON HIS PERFORMANCE IN THE 120TH ARMY-NAVY GAME

HON. MARK E. GREEN
OF TENNESSEE
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure and sincerity that I take this opportunity to commend Malcolm Perry of Clarksville, Tennessee for his extraordinary performance as the quarterback for the Naval Academy in the 120th Army-Navy game.

From the time he was a student at Kenwood High School, Malcolm knew he wanted to play college football and join the military. As the star quarterback at the Naval Academy, he has the rare opportunity to do both. The son of two career Army enlistees with over forty combined years of service, Malcolm enrolled at the U.S. Naval Academy, and he will commission as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps after graduation.

As the senior quarterback and team captain for the Midshipmen, Malcolm capped off the regular season with a spectacular 31–7 win against Army, rushing for a career-high 304 yards—the most rushing yards by any player in the history of the Army-Navy game.

With his outstanding performance in this game, he set the school records for rushing yards (1,804) and yards of total offense (2,831) in a season—quite a feat considering the many great teams that the Naval Academy has fielded in its long and proud history of athletic excellence.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating this young man on his outstanding leadership and accomplishments at the Naval Academy, and we wish Malcolm great success in the years to come.

CONGRATULATING AMERICA’S NEWEST CITIZENS

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY
OF INDIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure and sincerity that I take this time to congratulate thirty individuals who will take their oaths of citizenship on January 10, 2020. This memorable occasion will be held at the United States Courthouse and Federal Building in Hammond, Indiana.

America is a country founded by immigrants. From its beginning, settlers have come from countries around the world to the United States in search of better lives for their families. Oath ceremonies are a shining example of what is so great about the United States of America—that people from all over the world can come together and unite as members of a free, democratic nation. These individuals realize that nowhere else in the world offers a better opportunity for success than here in America.

On January 10, 2020, the following people, representing many nations throughout the world, will take their oaths of citizenship in Hammond, Indiana: Melissa June Licupa Pineda, Alexis Almaraz Fierro, Katelyn Alysous, Rosaura Virginia Gonzalez, Blanca Carrasco, Maria Guadalupe Murillo, Jacqueline Angelica Terry Palacios, Jovanny Las Pinas Minton, Samuel Obiara Izuora, Alicia Carda, Brenda Carda, Ignacio Gerda Avalos, Horacio Joseph Vazquez, Kelly-Sue Stone, My Thi Hoa Pham, Maria Elisa Tirado, Arturo Miranda, Jr., Komo Yawa Ouattara, Victoria Izuora, Olena Gorbatenko Therrien, Yulia Vladimir Vorobiev, Alexander Nicholas Vorobiev, Oscar Esteban Magallanes, Liz Chacon, Gerardo Miranda, Edys Nohemy Yoder, Nga Thu Pham, Myra Espinosa O’Lena, Gertrude N. Manda, and Carl Peter Zmijewski.

Although each individual has sought to become a citizen of the United States for his or her own reasons, be it for education, occupation, or to offer their loved ones better lives, each is inspired by the fact that the United States of America is, as Abraham Lincoln described it, a country “... of the people, by the people, and for the people.” They realize that the United States is truly a free nation. By seeking American citizenship, they have made the decision that they want to live in a place where, as guaranteed by the First Amendment, they can practice religion as they choose, speak their minds without fear of punishment, and assemble in peaceful protest should they choose to do so.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating these individuals who will become citizens of the United States of America on January 10, 2020. They, too, will be American citizens, guaranteed the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We, as a free and democratic nation, congratulate them and welcome them.

IN RECOGNITION OF SOC (SEAL)
EDWARD GALLAGHER, USN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Edward Gallagher of Clarksville, Maryland for his extraordinary performance in the Navy's Special Operations Community. Gallagher, a former SEAL, has demonstrated exceptional courage and skill in his military service.

On January 30, 2019, Chief Gallagher returned home after completing his eighth combat deployment. Instead of receiving a hero's welcome, he became the target of a tyrannical witch-hunt. This witch-hunt was led by a few junior SEALs, a completely incompetent NCIS Agent and a Navy Judge Advocate General (JAG) lawyers that were hoping to make their careers off court-martialed Gallagher. Despite the numerous illegal and underhanded tactics by the prosecution, Chief Gallagher was found not guilty of all major charges by a jury of his peers on July 1, 2019. Later, President Donald Trump personally intervened to stem the Navy’s harassment towards Gallagher and restored his rank to Chief Petty Officer. Realizing the poor treatment and errors that they had made, the United States Navy allowed Chief Gallagher to officially retire on November 30, 2019.

While no one could blame Chief Gallagher if he was angry about the horrible manner in which he was treated at the end of his career, he instead has decided to live free of anger and has forgiven the individuals who have wronged him. I believe this is due to Eddie’s faith in God and an amazing woman that keeps him grounded, his loving wife, Andrea. She and their three beautiful children, Treven, Ava and Ryan, have faithfully supported Eddie throughout his numerous deployments and were his biggest advocates during the Navy’s foolish witch-hunt. Their love along with his brother, Sean Gallagher, and his parents, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Joseph and Melissa Gallagher have strengthened Eddie throughout his military service; and I congratulate them as well on this special occasion.

- This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions that are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in **this typeface** indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.
am proud to share in the celebration of Special Operations Chief Petty Officer (SEAL) Edward Gallagher’s military career and as he and his family step into the next chapter of their lives, I ask my colleagues in this chamber to join me in wishing the Gallagher family fair winds and following seas.

In the House of Representatives

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, after 31 years of public service, Palmdale City Manager James “Jim” Purtee announced his retirement effective at the end of 2019. Jim began his diverse career in public service with the City of Simi Valley in 1988. He spent over 27 years working for several city departments in Simi Valley and was involved in improving access to affordable housing, ensuring continued economic development, and contributing to city planning efforts. In addition, Jim spent his free time doing community service.

In July 2012, Jim was named as the City of Simi Valley’s Assistant City Manager, where he was responsible for intergovernmental relations and served as the City’s public information officer. While serving as the Assistant City Manager, Jim obtained S&P rating upgrade of AAA for the City of Simi Valley. He sponsored a $5 million citywide investment in replacing technology services and turned a $2.4 million budget deficit to a $2.4 million budget surplus in just three years. Jim took the lead on working with city departments to complete a biogas fueling project for the City’s transit buses and implemented a $15 million energy savings and production project. During his time in public service, Jim managed a $160 million investment portfolio and increased investment returns by 400 percent over the benchmark and earned an additional $9.7 million on City funds over a six-year period. Jim was instrumental in securing $780,000 in grant funding to invest in citywide energy efficiency programs and oversaw countless affordable housing programs to benefit thousands of families.

In October 2015, Jim became the City Manager for the City of Palmdale. While serving as City Manager in Palmdale, Jim amassed a number of significant achievements and successes. As City Manager for the City of Palmdale, Jim obtained an S&P rating upgrade to AA- and engaged in community partnerships which contributed to reducing the City of Palmdale’s Part I crime rate by over 40 percent in just 5 years. Under Jim’s leadership, the City of Palmdale was named as the 44th Safest City in the US, was ranked in the top 15 percent of fiscally responsible cities in California and as a top 25 city in the U.S. to Live the American Dream.

Jim implemented initiatives to assist thousands of families in obtaining safe, decent, and affordable housing. He carried out fiscal and legislative actions that provided over $100 million in positive fiscal impacts to communities and also contributed to reducing air pollution, improving water quality, and protecting natural resources and wildlife. Jim was recognized with the “City Manager of the Year Award” by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the premier local government leadership and management organization, at its annual conference in Baltimore earlier this year for his significant contributions and achievements in the advancement of local government administration for 30 years.

An avid supporter of military veterans, Jim has volunteered countless hours with local veteran organizations. He is also an advocate for supporting mental health programs, especially with our local youth population, and has served on the Board of Directors for Palmdale Regional Medical Center. Jim holds both a bachelor’s and master’s degrees from California State University, Northridge, and is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education for senior executives in state and local government programs.

Jim has been happily married for the past 33 years to Tina, whom he has known since high school, and they are the proud parents of four children: Erika, Elyssa, Ariana, and Ethan.

In the House of Representatives

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committees on the Judiciary and on Homeland Security, I rise to address the Trump Administration’s targeted killing of Qasem Soleimani, head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard and the impact of this decision on American national security interests and the safety of American armed forces personnel and civilians in the region and around the world.

The decision to kill Major General Qasem Soleimani, the head of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps’ Quds Force, the elite special forces battle group of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), assisted Syrian strongman Bashar al Assad in committing atrocity, has raised serious questions about the possible consequences of this action.

In addition, we do know whether the action taken was the product of a carefully developed geopolitical strategy developed after extensive discussion within the national security apparatus of the short and longterm consequences for the security of the region and our nation and its people.

Similarly, we do not know whether it was taken in consultation and agreement with our regional and international allies; and whether there is now in place a strategy to ensure that the action taken does not lead to a greater escalation of tensions between Iran and the United States or in the worst case, another war in the Middle East placing at risk the lives and safety of millions of people.

Qasem Soleimani appears to be the apparent mastermind behind Soleimani’s attack on the U.S. embassy in Baghdad.

Soleimani as long-time chief of the Quds Force, the elite special forces battalion of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), assisted Syrian strongman Bashar al Assad in committing atrocity. In fact, Soleimani was regarded as a future president of Iran.

It was foreseeable that the killing of Soleimani by American forces was likely to invite retaliation by Iran putting at risk American military and civilian personnel, as well as its allies in the region and across the globe. That is why it was essential that the Administration have in place a sound and well-considered and meticulously developed strategy for managing disputes with Iran.

That does not appear to be the case. There is no evidence that the Administration consulted with Congress or the Gang of 8, no evidence that it enlisted or even consulted our allies in NATO or the region, no evidence that the Administration has a working and well-functioning national security council apparatus.

This is a critical Pottery Barn failure in dealing with the Middle East for as former Secretary of State Colin Powell stated before the Iraq War, “If you break it, you bought it.”

Iran Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei has vowed that a “harsh retaliation is waiting” for the United States as a consequence of the action taken yesterday by the Administration.

It is imperative that the Administration have in place a strategy to counter and deescalate any Iranian response and have in place measures to protect the safety of Americans residing or travelling abroad and to protect the security of the homeland.

We must be prepared and ready because the decision to kill Qasem Soleimani has the potential to be the most consequential assassination of a political leader since the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in 1914.
Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Oxford High School football team for winning the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) Class 6A football championship.

IN HONOR OF OXFORD WINNING THE AHSAA CLASS 6A FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. MIKE ROGERS OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the Oxford High School football team for winning the AHSAA Class 6A football championship. The Yellow Jackets defeated Spanish Fort 14–13 in the championship game on December 6th played at Jordan-Hare Stadium at Auburn University. After an exciting game, the Yellow Jackets secured their victory in the final minute of the 4th quarter.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating the students and faculty of Oxford High School, the coaches, the players and all the Yellow Jacket fans on this exciting achievement. Go Yellow Jackets.

REMEMBERING LISA POWERS COOPER

HON. STEVE COHEN OF TENNESSEE
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay a heartfelt tribute to Lisa Powers Cooper, wife of my good friend and former Tennessee State Senator Jerry Cooper, who died last Friday at her home in McMinnville. As chief of the Consumer Services Division of the Tennessee Public Utilities Commission since 2009, Lisa Cooper showed her dedication to public service. As a law student over seven years, she showed her perseverance, graduating from the Nashville School of Law in 2009 while working full time. But as the inseparable wife of Jerry, she showed the kind of love and support that inspired all of us who knew them. Their marriage was bigger than the sum of its parts and showed that two real can become one. As a valued friend, Lisa was always supportive of me when I served in the state Senate and since I have been in Congress. She often offered wise counsel over the phone, but also sent her love and prayers.

A graduate of Trevecca Nazarene University, Lisa worked in government relations before going into state government, all while raising a family and doting on her grandchildren. I want to express my deep condolences to Jerry; Lisa’s parents, Larry Powers, Sr. and Linda Pritchett; her daughter Holly and her husband Ward Bushhart of Nashville; stepdaughters and their spouses Elisa and Barry Luna, Sally and Mike Pack and Faith and Chase McGee; her grandchildren; her extended family and her many, many dear friends and colleagues. She lived a good, virtuous and remarkable life and will be missed.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. LEVIN of California. Madam Speaker, this Holiday season, I am proud to recognize Chyanne Thomas, a postal worker from Vista, as my Constituent of the Month. Chyanne is a hero for two children, their families, and our entire community.

Chyanne’s vigilance while on her regular delivery route resulted in the identification of two children who had been reported missing. Her quick and caring response allowed these two local children to be safely reunited with their concerned families.

When Chyanne spotted Abby, a 15-year-old with autism, she sprang into action. She used the skills she had learned in a previous job working with children with disabilities to keep Abby calm and safe until police arrived. Two weeks later, Chyanne saw a missing 4-year-old girl alone during her route and didn’t hesitate to approach her and make sure she was okay until police and her parents arrived. Without Chyanne’s awareness, compassion, and quick action, these two kids might still be missing.

I launched a Constituent of the Month to recognize individuals in the 49th District who have gone above and beyond to help their neighbors and support our community. I know the families of those two missing children would agree that Chyanne is well-deserving of this recognition. I am proud to recognize her as my Constituent of the Month.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the Ensuring Child Health Coverage Compensation in Divorce Act of 2019. This bill would require that when a court directs a non-custodial parent (including a stepparent) to provide health insurance to a child, the other parent can get reimbursed directly from the insurer for any out-of-pocket medical expenses for the child incurred by such parent, regardless of the source of insurance.

Typically in a divorce, one parent is court-ordered to provide health insurance for the child to prevent the child from going uninsured. However, the other parent may pay for out-of-pocket medical expenses for the child that are reimbursable by the insurer. Under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, group health insurers are required to directly reimburse a parent who pays for reimbursable out-of-pocket medical expenses when the other parent has been court-ordered to provide health insurance for the child. However, other health insurers are not required to directly reimburse the other parent.

This bill would provide the same requirements for all health insurers to ensure that the parent who pays for the out-of-pocket medical expenses is reimbursed.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.
In 2013, MSG Wonacott was named the Regiment Operation Assessment Element flight medic, and in 2016 he was selected as the Regiment Senior Medic. As the senior medic of the 160th SOAR, he supervised the regiment’s special operations flight medics, medical officers, and physicians’ assistants, and he has consistently gone above and beyond to ensure that the soldiers of the unit have access to the physical and mental care that they need. His merit and courage bring great credit to the United States Army, and I am honored to have served alongside him.

Among his many awards and citations, MSG Wonacott has received two Distinguished Flying Crosses, a Bronze Star Medal, a Purple Heart, a Meritorious Service Medal, and two Air Medals. On behalf of the United States Congress, I commend MSG Wonacott for his faithful and patriotic service to our nation, and I congratulate him on the occasion of his well-earned retirement from active duty.

IN HONOR OF CENTRAL-CLAY WINNING THE AHSAA CLASS 5A FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. MIKE ROGERS
OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the Central-Clay High School football team for winning the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) Class 5A football championship.

The Volunteers defeated Pleasant Grove 31–27 in the championship game on December 5th played at Jordan-Hare Stadium at Auburn University. This is their second straight title.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating the students and faculty of Central-Clay High School, the coaches, the players and all the Volunteer fans on this exciting achievement. Go Vols.

LOUISIANA ACT 620 AMICUS BRIEF

HON. JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER
OF WASHINGTON
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my strong support of the pro-life amicus brief filed by 207 of my colleagues with the U.S. Supreme Court relating to June Medical Services, LLC v. Gee. Due to the unusual level of pressing business last month before the House and the Appropriations Committee on which I serve, I did not have the opportunity to thoroughly review the brief prior to the filing deadline. I affirm my full support for the brief. My record shows consistent support for life at all stages, and that has not and will not change.
from her legal career in the mid-eighties to attend Union Theological Seminary and was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1991.

Rev. Overall began serving as the Priest of St. Ann’s Episcopal Church in 1993. Built in 1841, the Parish is the oldest continuously used church in the Bronx and it has a storied history. During her tenure as priest, Mother Martha has expanded upon that legacy. The church holds weekly services in English and Spanish, and members of the church help serve meals to homeless seniors and families in the surrounding community. The food pantry program operates twice a week and feeds over 6,000 people a month. The church also has an after-school program to enhance skills for children and provide them healthy meals and nutritional education. Reverend Overall also provided job opportunities to young adults interested in teaching through the Children’s Defense Fund Freedom School at St. Ann’s Episcopal Church. Many of these programs, and Reverend Overall’s work, have been featured in books and in the press.

Through all of this, Mother Martha has been a passionate advocate for our community, from children to seniors. She has worked every day to improve our borough, and the lives of those who live here. Her compassion and dedication have positively affected the lives of thousands of people.

The Bronx is a better place because of the work Rev. Overall has done over the years. Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring The Reverend Dr. Martha R. Overall for her extraordinary work and her lasting legacy.

HONORING THE LIFE OF OFFICER JACKSON RYAN WINKELNER

HON. TOM RICE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Jackson Ryan Winkeler who was killed in the line of duty on January 5, 2020 in Florence, South Carolina.

Officer Winkeler was attempting to make a traffic stop when fired upon by the suspect. Jackson paid the ultimate price while protecting his community and serving our country. He not only served in law enforcement, but also volunteered with the Latta Fire Department. He is a true hero.

The entire community is deeply saddened by the loss of Officer Winkeler. We cannot imagine the heavy sorrow that his family feels at this time. We pray that his life, service, and sacrifice will never be forgotten.

Madam Speaker, I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to the entire Winkeler family and friends for their loss. May God bless them and give them peace during this very difficult time. I ask that we all keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

IN HONOR OF LANETT WINNING THE AHSAA CLASS 1A FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. MIKE ROGERS OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the Lanett High School football team for winning the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) Class 1A football championship.

The Panthers defeated Mars Hill Bible 41–30 in the championship game on December 5th played at Jordan-Hare Stadium at Auburn University. The Panthers brought home the program’s second state title in three years.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating the students and faculty of Lanett High School, the coaches, the players and all the Panther fans on this exciting achievement.

Go Panthers.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DORIS MILLER MEDAL OF HONOR ACT OF 2020

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill titled the Doris Miller Medal of Honor Act of 2020. This bill would waive the strict limitations to upgrade Doris Miller’s Navy Cross to a Medal of Honor—an upgrade that is long overdue and exceedingly appropriate.

On December 7, 1941, we experienced one of the most calamitous territorial attacks in our nation’s history at Pearl Harbor. On this day, the dedication and courage of many of our service members were tried and proven true—one of which whose story I would like to tell.

Doris Miller was born on October 12, 1919, in my hometown of Waco, Texas, to parents Henrietta and Conery Miller. He worked on his father’s farm until 1938, after which he enlisted in the Navy to earn money for his family. At the time the Navy did not allow sailors of color to enlist in combat roles, leaving Miller relegated to a service-based role as a mess attendant on the USS West Virginia—where he was stationed during the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The USS West Virginia’s Action Report acknowledged Miller and his shipmates’ bravery for having “carried out every order promptly and enthusiastically, even when it meant danger to themselves. They did not attempt to abandon the bridge until ordered to do so,” and was described as “instrumental in hauling people along through oil and water to the quarterdeck, thereby unquestionably saving the lives of a number of people who might otherwise have been lost.” For his actions aboard the West Virginia, Miller was awarded the Navy Cross, cited for “distinguished devotion to duty, extraordinary courage and disregard for his own personal safety during the attack on the Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii, by Japanese forces on December 7, 1941.”

Miller’s actions during the attack on Pearl Harbor reflect unquestionably what the Medal of Honor represents; to honor those who distinguish themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their own lives above and beyond the call of duty. It is also important to note that of the 15 sailors who were awarded the Medal of Honor for similar actions during the attack, not a single one was African American.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill to award Doris Miller the highest honor that our nation can bestow upon a service member.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WEST STOCKHOLM CHIEF ROBERT WHITE, JR.

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of West Stockholm Chief Robert White, Jr.

On the evening of Thursday, December 5th, Chief White saw flames engulfing the home of one of his neighbors just a few houses away. He responded to the fire and was coordinating the response when he suffered a medical emergency at the scene and passed away that evening.

Robert White had been a dedicated public servant, serving the West Stockholm Fire Department for more than 33 years. In addition to being the chief of West Stockholm, he was also the Saint Lawrence County fire coordinator and trainer, playing a crucial role regionally. Outside of his roles in the fire department, Robert ran a local youth sports league and was very involved in the community. To his wife Trudy, the rest of his family and the West Stockholm community, I offer my sincerest condolences during this difficult time.

IN RECOGNITION OF BETTY CARR

HON. MIKE ROGERS OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Betty Carr. Betty has been an iconic fixture in Anniston for decades and an inspiration and advocate for local youth.

Betty grew up in Anniston in a family that placed an importance on their community and grew up in church at First United Methodist Church. Betty now attends Grace Episcopal Church.

She worked at the University of Alabama, ran Camp Grandview in Montgomery and was a Soda Jerk at the end of World War II. Betty is best known for her work with many generations of area youth. She worked as the youth and program director at the YMCA from 1967 to 1985. This month, the Anniston City Council unanimously supported that the section of West 14th Street in front of the YMCA will be named “Betty Carr Way.” After the YMCA, Betty also worked at the Chamber of Commerce.
Even today, Betty is still going strong spending her days greeting people at Classic on Noble. She has suffered from macular degeneration, but has not let losing her eyesight slow her down.

Betty will turn 95 on January 21.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Betty and her service to our youth. Please also join me in wishing her a very happy 95th birthday this month.
HIGHLIGHTS
See Interim Résumé of Congressional Activity.
Senate confirmed the nomination of Jovita Carranza, of Illinois, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

Senate

Chamber Action
Routine Proceedings, pages S31–S61
Measures Introduced: Two bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 3151–3152, and S. Con. Res. 32.

Measures Reported:
Report to accompany S. 2714, to amend the America COMPETES Act to reauthorize the ARPA–E program. (S. Rept. No. 116–195)
Report to accompany S. 2556, to amend the Federal Power Act to provide energy cybersecurity investment incentives, to establish a grant and technical assistance program for cybersecurity investments. (S. Rept. No. 116–196)
Report to accompany S. 2657, to support innovation in advanced geothermal research and development. (S. Rept. No. 116–197)
Report to accompany S. 2799, to require the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of the Interior to establish a joint Nexus of Energy and Water Sustainability Office. (S. Rept. No. 116–198)
Report to accompany S. 2702, to require the Secretary of Energy to establish an integrated energy systems research, development, and demonstration program. (S. Rept. No. 116–199)

Solomson Nomination—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the nomination of Matthew H. Solomson, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims.
A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that notwithstanding the provisions of Rule XXII, at 11 a.m., on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, Senate vote on the motions to invoke cloture on the nominations of Michael George DeSombre, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand, Department of State, in the order listed; that if cloture is invoked on the nominations, all post-cloture time be expired at 5 p.m., on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, and Senate vote on confirmation of the nominations in the order listed, with no intervening action or debate.
A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination of Matthew H. Solomson, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims, at approximately 10 a.m., on Wednesday, January 8, 2020.

Ray Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Paul J. Ray, of Tennessee, to be Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget.
A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Michael George DeSombre, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand, Department of State.
Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:
Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session.
Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination.
Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:
By 88 yeas to 5 nays (Vote No. EX. 2), Jovita Carranza, of Illinois, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

Executive Communications:
Committee Meetings

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Finance: Committee ordered favorably reported H.R. 5430, to implement the Agreement between the United States of America, the United Mexican States, and Canada attached as an Annex to the Protocol Replacing the North American Free Trade Agreement.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 12 public bills, H.R. 5540–5551; and 4 resolutions, H.J. Res. 82; and H. Res. 776–778, were introduced.

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

   H.R. 4329, to provide for disclosure of additional material information about public companies and establish a Sustainable Finance Advisory Committee, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 116–365);
   H. Res. 779, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 535) to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to designate per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (H. Rept. 116–366);
   H.R. 4500, to direct the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information to take certain actions to enhance the representation of the United States and promote United States leadership in communications standards-setting bodies, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 116–367, Part 1);
   H. Res. 575, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that all stakeholders in the deployment of 5G communications infrastructure should carefully consider and adhere to the recommendations of “The Prague Proposals”, with amendments (H. Rept. 116–368, Part 1); and
   H.R. 2881, to require the President to develop a strategy to ensure the security of next generation mobile telecommunications systems and infrastructure in the United States and to assist allies and strategic partners in maximizing the security of next generation mobile telecommunications systems, infrastructure, and software, and for other purposes, with amendments (H. Rept. 116–369, Part 1).

Communication from Chairman—Democratic Caucus Resignation: The Speaker laid before the House a communication from the Chairman of the Democratic Caucus stating that Representative Van Drew has resigned as a Member of the Democratic Caucus.

Communication from Speaker—Committee Membership Vacated: The Speaker notified the House that Representative Van Drew’s election to the Committee on Agriculture has been automatically vacated pursuant to clause 5(b) of rule X effective today, January 7, 2020.

Communication from Speaker—Committee Membership Vacated: The Speaker notified the House that Representative Van Drew’s election to the Committee on Natural Resources has been automatically vacated pursuant to clause 5(b) of rule X effective today, January 7, 2020.

Recess: The House recessed at 2:04 p.m. and reconvened at 6:30 p.m.
Call of the House: The Speaker called the House to order and ascertained the presence of a quorum (384 present, Roll No. 1).

Pages H3–4

Committee to Notify the President of the Assembly of the House: The House agreed to H. Res. 776, authorizing the Speaker to appoint a committee on the part of the House to notify the President that a quorum of the House has assembled, and that the House is ready to receive any communication that he may be pleased to make. Subsequently, the Speaker appointed Representatives Hoyer and McCarthy to the committee.

Page H4

Notifying the Senate That a Quorum of the House Has Assembled: The House agreed to H. Res. 777, authorizing the Clerk of the House to inform the Senate that a quorum of the House is present and that the House is ready to proceed with business.

Page H4

Meeting Hour: The House agreed to H. Res. 778, providing for the hour of meeting of the House.

Page H4

Morning Hour Debate: Agreed by unanimous consent that the order of the House of January 3, 2019, providing for Morning Hour Debate, be extended for the remainder of the 116th Congress, except that H. Res. 778 shall supplant H. Res. 10.

Page H4

Member Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Hunter, wherein he resigned as Representative for the Fiftieth Congressional District of California, effective at close of business on January 13, 2020.

Page H4

Senate Referral: S. 3076 was held at the desk.

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H3.

Quorum Calls—Votes: One quorum call (Roll No. 1) developed during the proceedings of today and appears on pages H3–4.

Adjournment: The House met at 2 p.m. and adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Committee Meetings

PFAS ACTION ACT OF 2019

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 535, the “PFAS Action Act of 2019”. The Committee granted, by record vote of 9–4, a structured rule providing for consideration of the H.R. 535, the “PFAS Action Act of 2019”. The rule provides one hour of general debate on the bill equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 116–45, modified by the amendment printed in Part A of the Rules Committee report, shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in Part B the Rules Committee report accompanying the resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report, may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in Part B of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Chairman Pallone, and Representatives Shimkus, Balderson, and Burgess.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2020

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine the Nonpoint Source Management Program under the Clean Water Act, focusing on perspectives from states, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of William Scott Hardy, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania, John F. Heil III, to be United States District Judge for the Northern, Eastern and Western Districts of Oklahoma, David Cleveland Joseph, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana, Cory T. Wilson, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi, and Edward Hulvey Meyers, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims, 10 a.m., SD–226.
House


Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, hearing entitled “Americans at Risk: Manipulation and Deception in the Digital Age”, 10:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.
### Interim Résumé of Congressional Activity

**FIRST SESSION OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS**

The first table gives a comprehensive résumé of all legislative business transacted by the Senate and House. The second table accounts for all nominations submitted to the Senate by the President for Senate confirmation.

#### DATA ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 3, 2019 through January 3, 2020</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days in session</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time in session</td>
<td>947 hrs., 46'</td>
<td>787 hrs., 53'</td>
<td>1,734 hrs., 99'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congressional Report:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pages of proceedings</td>
<td>7,247</td>
<td>12,308</td>
<td>19,555</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extensions of Remarks</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,650</td>
<td>1,650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public bills enacted into law</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private bills enacted into law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bills in conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures passed, total</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>1,158</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senate bills</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>157</td>
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<tr>
<td>House bills</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>504</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senate joint resolutions</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>House joint resolutions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senate concurrent resolutions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>House concurrent resolutions</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simple resolutions</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>410</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures reported, total</td>
<td>* 338</td>
<td>* 352</td>
<td>* 690</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senate bills</td>
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<td>291</td>
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<td>Simple resolutions</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>Special reports</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference reports</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures pending on calendar</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>375</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures introduced, total</td>
<td>3,703</td>
<td>6,467</td>
<td>10,170</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bills</td>
<td>3,148</td>
<td>5,529</td>
<td>8,677</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>143</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concurrent resolutions</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>113</td>
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<td>Simple resolutions</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>1,237</td>
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<td>Quorum calls</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Yea-and-nay votes</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>756</td>
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<td>372</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bills vetoed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vetoes overridden</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*These figures include all measures reported, even if there was no accompanying report. A total of 189 written reports have been filed in the Senate, 364 reports have been filed in the House.

#### DISPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 3, 2019 through January 3, 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civilian nominees, totaling 340, disposed of as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed .................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconfirmed .............................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn .................................................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Civilian nominees, totaling 1,626, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed ................................................................. | 1,322 |
Unconfirmed ............................................................. | 303 |
Withdrawn ................................................................. | 1 |

Air Force nominees, totaling 5,979, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed ................................................................. | 5,977 |
Unconfirmed ............................................................. | 2 |

Army nominees, totaling 6,569, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed ................................................................. | 6,557 |
Unconfirmed ............................................................. | 12 |

Navy nominees, totaling 4,616, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed ................................................................. | 4,611 |
Unconfirmed ............................................................. | 5 |

Marine Corps nominees, totaling 1,432, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed ................................................................. | 1,429 |
Unconfirmed ............................................................. | 3 |

Total nominees carried over from the First Session ................ | 0 |
Total nominees received this Session ................................ | 20,762 |
Total confirmed .......................................................... | 20,242 |
Total unconfirmed .......................................................... | 93 |
Total withdrawn .......................................................... | 22 |
Total returned to the White House .................................... | 405 |
Next Meeting of the SENATE
10 a.m., Wednesday, January 8

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Matthew H. Solomson, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims, and vote on the motions to invoke cloture on the nominations of Matthew H. Solomson, Eleni Maria Roumel, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims, and Michael George DeSombre, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand, Department of State, at 11 a.m. If cloture is invoked on the nominations, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nominations at 3 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
10:00 a.m., Wednesday, January 8

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of H.R. 535—PFAS Action Act (Subject to a Rule).

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE
Brownley, Julia, Calif., E4
Cohen, Steve, Tenn., E5
Frankel, Lois, Fla., E6
Green, Mark R., Tenn., E3, E5
Herrera Beutler, Jaime, Wash., E6
Hunter, Duncan, Calif., E3
Jackson Lee, Sheila, Tex., E4
Johnson, Eddie Bernice, Tex., E7
Joyce, John, Pa., E6
Levin, Mike, Calif., E5
Norton, Eleanor Holmes, The District of Columbia, E5
Rice, Tom, N.C., E7
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