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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord, the giver of grace, in these turbulent and tempestuous times when we do not know what a day may bring, You continue to be sovereign. Morning after morning, we continue to receive Your new mercies.

Lord, sustain our lawmakers with Your unfailing love that is as high as the heavens. May our Senators know that, in everything, You continue to work for the good of those who love You and who are called according to Your purpose for them. Pour out upon our legislators the riches of Your mercy so that they may stay steadfast in faith.

Eternal God, hear us as we pray. We need stronger hearts, greater faith, and clearer perception.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute as in morning business.

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

FEDERALIST 26

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, there is a story that we often hear about in high school and government classes

where George Washington is said to have told Jefferson that the Senate was created to “cool” House legislation as a saucer is used to cool hot tea.

Whether that is historically accurate or not, it is a good summation of the role of the U.S. Senate. Now I am going to quote from Federalist 62 what Madison said. He could have made this quote a little easier to understand, but here it is anyway: “The necessity of a senate is not less indicated by the propensity of all single and numerous assemblies to yield to the impulse of sudden and violent passions, and to be seduced by factious leaders into intemperate and pernicious resolutions.”

That is the end of Madison’s quote, Federalist 62.

Now, considering Madison’s admonition, it should be no surprise to anyone whatsoever that the Senate passes fewer bills than the House and always has. But how come those who parrot the partisan talking points that the Senate is a legislative graveyard don’t also talk about the over 200 Senate bills on Speaker PELOSI’s desk?

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

IRAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I had planned to discuss the corrosive political games that the Speaker of the House continues to play with the solemn issue of Presidential impeachment, but the deadly serious events of yesterday evening threw those political squabbles into the starkest possible relief.

I was troubled but not surprised by reports that Iran fired ballistic missiles at U.S. forces in Iraq last night. As I have warned, the threat posed by Iraq has been growing for years, and

this threat will continue even beyond the death of Tehran’s master terrorist, Soleimani.

We must remain vigilant in the face of serious threats posed by Tehran. Apparently, these strikes did not kill or wound Americans, but they demonstrate the significant progress Iran has made over the last decade in building a large, long-range, and accurate ballistic missile force. Many of us have long cited the absence of any constraint on Iran’s sophisticated missile program as one of the primary shortcomings of the Obama Iran deal, and this strike stands as a reminder to the world of this growing threat.

We rightly talk a lot in this Chamber about American interests, but last night was another stark reminder that Iran and its proxies have been a cancer on Iraq’s sovereignty and Iraq’s politics for some time.

Tehran has long shown disregard for Iraqi lives. Just in the last few weeks, its militia proxies have slaughtered innocent Iraqi protesters, and it has launched ballistic missiles at its territory. The millions of Iraqis who have been taking to the streets for months to protest have understood this perfectly well.

I spoke to the President last night. I am grateful for his patience and prudence as he and his Cabinet deliberate on how to respond appropriately to the latest Iranian provocation. As a superpower, we have the capacity to exercise restraint and to respond at a time and place of our choosing, if need be. I believe the President wants to avoid conflict or needless loss of life but is rightly prepared to protect American lives and interests. I hope Iran’s leaders do not miscalculate by questioning our collective will and launching further attacks. For our part, I certainly hope our own congressional deliberations do not give Tehran a reason to question our national will.

Top officials will provide a classified briefing to Senators today. As I have

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



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said before, I hope all Senators will wait for the facts before they pass judgment on the recent strike on Soleimani. Patience, caution, and restraint can sometimes be in short supply around here, but when matters of national security are at hand, it is imperative that we seek out the facts, restrain our partisan urges, and concentrate on protecting our country.

For this reason, it has troubled me that Speaker PELOSI responded to the earliest reports yesterday by leaping to blame “needless provocations” by our administration. In other words, she was blaming the United States.

So let’s be clear. We can and should debate how to responsibly respond to Iranian threats, but the notion that our administration is to blame for Iranian aggression—that is nonsense. Utter nonsense.

For 40 years since the founding of the Islamic Republic, Iran has consistently pursued aggression against the United States, against Israel, and against its Arab neighbors. The question before us is not who is to blame for the aggression. It is how best to deter and defend against it.

IMPEACHMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I do need to say a few words about the other serious matter occupying the Congress.

Late last year, Speaker PELOSI and House Democrats sped through a slapdash impeachment of President Trump in 12 weeks because they insisted the need to undo the 2016 election was urgent—urgent, they said.

Since then, the same people have spent 3 weeks dragging their heels and refusing to proceed to a Senate trial. Supposedly, the explanation for this shameless game playing is that Speaker PELOSI wanted leverage—leverage—to reach into the Senate and dictate our trial proceedings to us.

I have made clear from the beginning that no such leverage exists. It is nonexistent. Yesterday, we made it clear it will never exist. A majority of the Senate has decided that the first phase of an impeachment trial should track closely with the unanimous bipartisan precedent that all 100 Senators supported for the first phase of the Clinton trial back in 1999. There will be no haggling with the House over Senate procedure. We will not cede our authority to try this impeachment. The House Democrats’ turn is over. The Senate has made its decision.

The 1999 precedent does not guarantee witnesses or foreclose witnesses. Let me say that again. It neither guarantees witnesses nor forecloses witnesses. It leaves those determinations until later in the trial, where they belong. I fully expect the parties will raise questions of witnesses at the appropriate time.

I would remind my friends on the other side that I strongly suspect that not all of the potential witnesses would be people the Democrats are eager to

hear from. The Senate will address all of these questions at the appropriate time, and that is for the Senate and the Senate only to decide, period.

Now even fellow Democrats are expressing public concern over the Speaker’s endless appetite for these cynical games. Here is what the senior Senator from Connecticut told the press yesterday. He said: “I think the time has passed. She should send the articles over.” And the senior Senator from West Virginia said: “I think it needs to start; I really do.” And the junior Senator from Maine said: “I think it is time for the Speaker to send the articles over.”

My Democratic friends are losing patience, just as the American people are losing patience. The country knows this absurdity should not go on. So what do the American people say?

A recent Harvard-Harris poll found that 58 percent of Americans believe Speaker PELOSI should send the articles to the Senate, not continue holding them up. Let me say that again. This is a Harvard poll. It found that 58 percent of Americans believe Speaker PELOSI should send the articles to the Senate, not continue holding them up. In the same survey, 77 percent believe Democrats need to accept the same structure as the Clinton trial rather than hold out for special new rules. So we are beginning to hear from the American people how they view this standoff.

We all know that Senators have a diversity of opinions about President Trump, about the House inquiry, and about the optimal structure for a trial. But notwithstanding all of this, no Senator—no Senator—should want the House of Representatives to steamroll institutional norms and dictate our business to us.

Haven’t enough toxic new precedents been set in recent months? Hasn’t the House broken enough constitutional china already?

This is not about the current Speaker and the current President. Do my colleagues believe this is what a future Democratic President would deserve? Do they believe it is good for the country?

There is a reason the Constitution reads the way it does. The House has the sole power of impeachment. They have exercised it. It is the Senate to whom the Founders gave the sole power to try all impeachments, end of story.

Yet, even as her fellow Democrats are jumping ship, the Speaker is trying to double down. Yesterday evening, in the midst of these deadly serious events, Speaker PELOSI put out yet another statement saying that she has no intention to end her political game playing. At the very same time that a global crisis was unfolding in realtime, she published yet another “Dear Colleague” letter saying that she intends to keep our Commander in Chief in this limbo indefinitely.

I am glad Democratic Senators are losing patience with this. I would urge

my friend the Democratic leader to listen to his own Members. My distinguished colleague from New York, as the minority leader in the U.S. Senate, is a senior Member of an independent branch of our bicameral legislature.

The Senate is not a creature of the House. The Democratic leader does not need to continue to be in thrall to the Speaker. He does not need to keep colluding with outside efforts to supplant the judgment of his own colleagues. Stand up for the Senate. Stand up for our institutions. Stand up for the country.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

IRAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last night, the Department of Defense confirmed reports that Iran launched missiles at a number of our installations in Iraq that housed U.S. and coalition forces. As details continue to emerge, it appears that there have been no casualties. We commend the professionalism and bravery of our servicemembers and other personnel in harm’s way.

While we are thankful that there were no casualties and we are thankful for the safety of American forces and personnel in the region, I condemn the attack by the Iranian Government and remain concerned about the risk of further escalation of hostilities in the Middle East. Now, more than ever, the

United States must be clear-headed and sure-footed about what comes next. The American people do not want a war with Iran, and the President does not have the authority to wage one.

Yesterday, we learned that the President had ordered the deployment of at least as many as 4,500 soldiers to the region—potentially more. Beyond Iraq, the U.S. military now has more than 70,000 troops in the Middle East, from Kuwait to Qatar, to Afghanistan, to the UAE, to Saudi Arabia, to Jordan, Oman, and Bahrain.

The President has promised to get the United States out of these forever wars in the Middle East, but the arrow is headed in the wrong direction.

Mr. President, how many more is it going to be? How long will they remain abroad? What is their objective? How will we assure their safety? Will more be deployed in the weeks and months ahead?

These are urgent questions. The administration must answer them. But so far, there has been a profound lack of information provided to Congress from the Department of Defense concerning what the Department is doing in response to Iran.

So I join Senators REED and DURBIN in requesting regular briefings and documents from the administration detailing the number of troops the President has deployed and plans to deploy in support of contingency plans with respect to Iran. We need to know if the administration is committing additional troops to the region and for how long.

Our letter urges the administration to clarify to the American people and our military that international law prohibits the deliberate targeting of cultural sites and that such an order would be unlawful and should not be followed.

The American people, rightfully, have serious concerns about a war with Iran and whether we are safer today because of this President's foreign policy, which is so often impulsive and erratic. I am afraid these impulsive and erratic actions throughout the world are making us less safe.

IMPEACHMENT

Mr. President, now, on impeachment, yesterday, Leader MCCONNELL announced that he has the votes to pass a partisan resolution to set the rules for the impeachment trial of President Trump. It was another unfortunate confirmation that Leader MCCONNELL has no intention of working with the minority to establish rules of a fair and honest trial that examines the evidence, hears from witnesses, and receives the relevant documents.

I have asked Leader MCCONNELL repeatedly to sit down and negotiate a plan where we would have witnesses and documents, and he has refused. Instead, Leader MCCONNELL, by his own admission, took his cues from the White House when it came to setting the parameters of a trial. Rather than engaging in any serious negotiation

with the Senate minority, he only spent time trying to convince his caucus that we should punt the questions of witnesses and documents to a later date.

I have explained why this proposal makes very little sense from the perspective of having a fair trial. The evidence should inform arguments in a trial. Evidence should not be an afterthought. Why would it make sense for both sides to present their entire case and then decide whether the Senate should request the evidence that we already know is out there?

It is extremely telling that Leader MCCONNELL and Senate Republicans are not willing to take a forthright position on whether we should call witnesses and request documents. They can only say that the issue should be addressed later. Their only refuge—not much of one—is to kick the can down the road. No one—no one—has advanced an argument as to why the four eyewitnesses we have proposed should not testify. No one has advanced an argument as to why the three specific sets of documents related to the charges against the President should not be provided. Republicans can only get behind kicking the can down the road because they know we have the full weight of the argument on our side. There is virtually no argument why we shouldn't have witnesses and why we shouldn't have documents.

I want to make one thing very clear: There will be votes—repeated votes—on the question of witnesses and documents at the trial. The initial votes will not be the last votes on the matter. Republicans can delay it, but they cannot avoid it. And when those votes come up, Senate Republicans—not Leader MCCONNELL, who has already cast his lot completely with the defendant, the President—will have two crucial things to worry about.

First, if the Senate runs a sham trial without witnesses, without documents, and without all of facts, then the President's acquittal at the end of the trial will be meaningless. A trial without all the facts is a farce. The verdicts of kangaroo courts are empty.

Leader MCCONNELL is fond of claiming that the House ran the "most rushed, least thorough, and most unfair impeachment inquiry in modern history." I know that is his talking point, but, in truth, Leader MCCONNELL is plotting to run the most rushed, least thorough, and most unfair impeachment trial in modern history. If the Senate rushes through the President's impeachment, if we actually fail to try the case, as the Constitution demands, then the true acquittal the President craves will be unobtainable.

The American people will see right through a partisan trial and understand that a rush to judgment renders that moot. They will understand that, when you don't want witnesses and documents, you are afraid of the truth and that you are covering something up, and that the likelihood is strong

that you did something very wrong. That is common sense. That is what all the polling data shows most Americans believe.

Second, when the Senate has votes on witnesses and documents, my Republican colleagues will have to answer to not just the President. The American people do not want a coverup. Whatever their view of the President, the American people want the Senate to have a fair trial. All the data shows that, with two more polls in the last few days. Every Senator will be under massive public pressure to support a fair trial that examines all the facts.

The American people understand the gravity of the charges against the President. The House has impeached the President for using the powers of his public office to benefit himself. The President was impeached because the House believes he tried to shake down a foreign leader into investigating his political opponent, pressuring a foreign power to interfere in our elections. He was impeached because he undertook an unprecedented campaign of obstruction to prevent Congress from investigating his wrongdoing.

The Articles of Impeachment suggest the President committed a grave injury to our democracy. The conduct they describe is exactly what the Founders most feared when they forged the impeachment powers of Congress.

If the Senate fails to hold a fair hearing of those charges, if one party—the President's party—decides to rush through a trial without hearing all the facts, witnesses, and documents, it will not just be the verdict of history that falls heavy on their shoulders. The American people, in the here and now, will pass a harsh judgment on Senators who participate in a coverup for the President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

IRAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last night Iran fired more than a dozen ballistic missiles at two military bases in Iraq where American troops were based. It was a brazen escalation with dangerous implications for the United States and the world.

We are fortunate. As of today, at this moment, none of our personnel have been reported to have been harmed, but the outrageous act was a clear and unsurprising retaliation to President Trump's killing of Iranian General Soleimani.

Our first order of business must be the safety of our military and civilian personnel in Iraq and the region, and I call on the Trump administration to make that the highest priority. Another immediate requirement is that the Congress step up and play one of the most important and long-neglected constitutional roles that we can envision. Article I, section 8, of the U.S. Constitution is clear in stating that the power to declare war is an explicit authority and power of Congress, as it

should be. One should never send our sons and daughters into conflict without the knowledge and consent of the American people. Our Founding Fathers were wise in making sure that this awesome power did not rest with a King-like leader but with the people's elected representatives. I have made this same argument regardless of whether the occupant of the White House was a Democrat or a Republican.

Some have had the audacity to argue that the 2001 authorization for the use of military force approved by this Congress to respond to the September 11, 2001, attacks or the 2002 AUMF, the war with Iraq, apply to the situation today in Iran. That is clearly wrong.

Let me be clear. I cannot imagine that anyone—anyone—who took either of those votes nearly 20 years ago—and I was here at that time—thought that they were approving a war with Iran two decades later. I certainly didn't.

This Congress should not be a troubling rubberstamp for President Trump's worst instincts by marching into another war in the Middle East. Simply, it is time for Members of this important body to show some courage and do their constitutional jobs. If you want a war with Iran, step up and face your constituents and record your vote accordingly.

The War Powers Resolution I filed last week, with the leadership of Senator TIM KAINE of Virginia, will be a first step regarding Congress's role in any conflict with Iran but not a last step. Ultimately, this President cannot start a war with Iran without the approval, under the Constitution, of Congress, and the Republican leadership should not roll over and play the role of lapdog when it comes to such a serious, life-and-death matter.

Tragically, this escalation with Iran—and the heightened risk to our personnel and security interests—was entirely predictable, except, it appears, to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo. The question was never the simplistic canard over whether killing Soleimani, a genuinely loathsome terrorist actor, was warranted or not, but, clearly, whether taking him off the face of the Earth was in the best interest of the United States.

Would such an act really advance the cause and interest and policies of our country or precipitate another war in the Middle East? The answer is increasingly upon us, and we here must debate this crisis before President Trump drags us even closer to this precipice.

Mr. President, sadly, President Trump's erratic and incoherent policies toward Iran have greatly contributed to the current crisis.

Before taking office, Iran's nuclear weapons program was halted in a historic agreement President Obama negotiated in cooperation with our European allies, China, and Russia.

Iran continued its malign behaviors in the region, but containing them was much easier without the threat of a nuclear bomb.

President Trump petulantly withdrew from the nuclear agreement and tried to starve Iran of benefits it was to receive from that deal.

He pursued an incomprehensible erratic policy of regime change by trying to flatter and meet with Iranian President Rouhani to negotiate a supposedly better deal . . . threatening Iran militarily . . . and tightening sanctions.

Those efforts were going nowhere. Iran was lashing out at American interests, we were alienated from our key allies, and Iran inched closer to re-starting its nuclear program.

And in just the last week alone, President Trump's impulsive actions managed to reverse the recent Iraqi protest sentiment that wanted Iran to stop meddling in its politics, leading instead to a vote this weekend in the Iraqi parliament to expel all U.S. forces.

Similarly, after months of anti-government protests in Iran, he almost instantaneously united Iranian public opinion in hostility toward the U.S.

Iran now announced it is restarting its nuclear program and our interests around the region are on high alert and are at risk from further Iranian attack for considerable time to come.

Tragically, all President Trump has to show for his foolish, quote, "maximum pressure" campaign is an enflamed region, attacks on our personnel, the U.S. military potentially being evicted from Iraq, greater U.S. troop deployments to the Middle East, and an America less safe and on the brink of war.

Most certainly not "all is well."

Have we learned nothing from the thousands of lost lives and injuries and trillions of dollars spent on the war in Iraq—a war sold to this country on false pretenses?

Are we going to be led to yet such another fiasco by some of the same voices around President Trump who have yet to account for their failures in their disastrous war in Iraq?

Will my Republican colleagues finally show some backbone to an unchecked, uninformed, and untrusted President about to bumble into another war in the Middle East?

For the sakes of the sons and daughters who would be sent to any war with Iran, I certainly hope so.

I see that my colleague from Illinois is here and has asked for permission to speak on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL GEORGE DESOMBRE

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I am here to speak on two matters.

The first is the nomination for Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand of Michael DeSombre. The Kingdom of Thailand has been a longtime U.S. ally and is a key partner for our efforts in the Southeast Asia region, both economically and militarily.

Unfortunately, this nominee has failed to reach out to either me or my

colleague and my senior Senator, DICK DURBIN, both of whom are his home-State Senators. He has not reached out to me. So I am asking my colleagues to please vote no on cloture on Michael DeSombre to be our Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand until such time as I am able to have a chance to sit down with him.

IRAN

Mr. President, now I would like to speak on the attacks from Iran.

"All is well." That is what Donald Trump said just hours after a dozen missiles were fired at two U.S. military bases last night. That is what he said as thousands of troops are readying to deploy to the Middle East, to a hotbed of anger, where wearing an American flag on your shoulder gets more dangerous by the day. That is what he said as his own Nation careens toward a reckless and unauthorized war of his own making, born out of his illiteracy in matters ranging from foreign policy to common sense.

Donald Trump never deigned to put on the uniform of this great Nation, using his father's money to buy his way out of military service when his country needed him in Vietnam.

Let me make something clear to Donald Trump. All is certainly not well when war is on the horizon, just because you want to look like the toughest kid on the playground. I am incredibly thankful that no Americans were killed last night in Iran's rebuttal attack, but some missed missiles should be no cause for celebration for the President. Just because there weren't fatalities yesterday doesn't mean there will not be any tragedies tomorrow.

We got into this situation because of Trump's glibness, because he liked the feeling of thumping his chest and the roar it got from FOX News, because he was so enamored by maximum pressure that he laughed at the idea of even minimum diplomacy. Now America is less safe as a result. So, no, Mr. President, all is certainly not well.

Sadly, Trump's glibness is shocking but not surprising. Last weekend, he was at his golf course in Florida, while more and more American troops were packing their rucks and getting ready to deploy 7,000 miles east. He was tweeting from Mar-a-Lago while the Iraqi Parliament was voting to expel U.S. servicemembers from their nation. He was rubbing shoulders with fellow millionaires from the comfort of his ritzy country club while the U.S.-led coalition against ISIS was announcing that we no longer have the resources to fight ISIS in Iraq and that, instead, we have to hunker down and focus on protecting our troops from the acts of revenge that Iran has promised are on the way.

A potential global conflict is veering closer by the hour, and it is because of Donald Trump. It is because of his impetuosity and his ignorance. It is because, once again, he has been manipulated by a hostile regime into decisions that further their goals while endangering the security of the Nation

Trump is actually supposed to be leading.

When I deployed to Iraq in 2004, I saw firsthand just how eager the country was to shake off Iran's influence. I watched as the anti-Iran protests continued long after I flew my last mission, as young Iraqis spoke out against Iran while I was back in Baghdad just this past spring, as protests roiled as recently as last month, when tens of thousands of Iraqis flooded the streets, raising voices and picket signs, demanding that their government crawl out from under Tehran's thumb.

Now, after Donald Trump decided to kill Major General Qasem Soleimani on sovereign Baghdad soil, those same streets are now filled with protesters once more. Yet, this time, they are marching in solidarity with the enemy that hundreds of Iraqis died marching against just a few short weeks ago.

With one choice, Donald Trump squandered the opportunity that existed to push against Iranian influence and for greater democracy and stability in the Middle East. In one fell swoop, he somehow managed to villainize the United States and victimize Iran, our enemy, isolating us from a long-term partner in Iraq and amping up Iran's influence in a country that everyone knows is vital to our security interests throughout the Middle East.

Look, Iran didn't want Trump to kill Soleimani, but they were hungry for all that has happened as a result. They were starving to go on the offensive, desperate to change the narrative, to swing public opinion and solidify their power in Iraq, to have a new excuse to attack anyone with an American flag on their shoulder and to shrug off the restraints of the nuclear deal.

Like a pawn in a game of chess he didn't even seem to know he was playing, Trump was baited into handing them all of that. Like a child who is blind to consequences, ignorant of his own ignorance, he has given Iran everything they could have asked for in the end, making it far more likely that tomorrow—or next week or next month—more Americans will be sent into another one of the forever wars he has bragged that he, and he alone, would be able to end.

We used to have the Monroe Doctrine and the Truman doctrine. Now we have the Trump doctrine, in which the leader of the free world, the Commander in Chief of the greatest fighting force ever assembled, gets manipulated again and again by dictators of hostile regimes. We have already seen it too many times since he was sworn into office. We have seen it played out on the streets of Venezuela and the deserts of northeast Syria. We have seen him get manipulated by tyrants in Pyongyang and Riyadh, subjugated by despots in Moscow and Ankara, as our allies laughed—literally laughed—at him behind his back.

All these dictators and hostile regimes know. They have realized the

same thing: The President of the United States is as easy to control as a toddler. Sweet-talk him or thump your chest and issue a few schoolyard threats and you have got him. He will fall for it every time, doing your bidding as if it is his own. I wish this weren't true, but my diaper-wearing, 20-month-old daughter has better impulse control than this President. Kids in school cafeterias know not to look up when someone tells them that "gullible" is written on the ceiling, but I am pretty sure Donald Trump, a man who once stared directly into a solar eclipse, will be caught stealing a glance, just to be sure.

The thing is, Trump told us who he was long before he stepped into the Oval Office, and too many chose not to believe him. As a so-called businessman, he left a string of bankruptcies wherever he went, destroying both his own companies and the small businesses unlucky enough to be caught in his wake.

Now, though, as Commander in Chief, his incompetence has cost us our standing in the world, endangered our national security, and placed an even bigger target on our deployed troops. Now, the currency that he is spending isn't just the money that his father left him but the blood of the men and women who have sworn an oath to defend this Nation to their deaths.

Sixteen years ago, I was one of the many Americans deployed to Iraq, one of the many who was willing to sacrifice everything, after our Commander in Chief convinced Congress that our Nation's security depended on removing Saddam Hussein and replacing his regime with a democracy. A decade and a half later, we have spent trillions of dollars to achieve that goal. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi citizens have been killed or displaced. Thousands of our bravest have died for that goal. Thousands more have been wounded and maimed.

We did not sacrifice all of that for this President to turn our Iraqi partners into adversaries who vote to kick us out of the very democracy we helped to build.

I have friends who have done 8, 9, 10 tours in Iraq, who go each time knowing they will probably be back on that same stretch of sand in a couple of years, who proudly answer the call and who will continue to answer the call, fighting for that same patch of desert over and over again because they believe—they believe—us when we tell them that will make America safer and more secure. They gain a few feet one tour, lose an inch or two the next, watching their buddies lose limbs or lives over that same piece of ground time and again.

Those troops show up ready to do their jobs whenever we ask, no matter what. We need to honor that. We need to honor their willingness to show up and carry out the mission. Now, especially after the attacks last night, we in Congress can honor them by doing

our job. We are the branch vested with that most solemn duty of declaring war, so we need to exert our constitutional control over this out-of-control toddler-in-chief and vote to prevent him from entangling us in another major war without legal authorization from Congress. In this moment, at this precipice, we need to be doing whatever we can to break the cycle of escalation. We need less chest-thumping and more diplomacy.

Don't get me wrong—I am glad this general is dead. He was responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American servicemembers over the last decades. I also want to stop Iranian influence, but this decision by this President has not done that.

If we truly want to honor our heroes in uniform, we wouldn't send them into harm's way without a clear-eyed discussion of the mission we are asking them to carry out and the consequences for both them and our Nation. Then, after we have that discussion, if we still believe war is the right path, I will vote yes. But so far, Trump has not even managed to come to us to give us his reasons for his actions. Having never sacrificed much himself, he doesn't understand our troops' sacrifices. Having never really served anything other than his own self-interests, he doesn't give a second thought to their service, treating their dedication to our Nation with the kind of reckless abandon he did the cash he blew through with each of his bankruptcies.

I don't need to remind anyone that Donald Trump is a five-deferment draft dodger. But his ignorance about military service isn't captured just by the privilege he showed when he dodged service in Vietnam—no, it is also revealed in his brazen embrace of torture, his hostility toward good order and discipline, and his stated desire to commit war crimes.

I implore my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to recognize our Commander in Chief for who he really is. Donald Trump will never willingly cut the puppet strings that the likes of Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong Un are using to make him dance. We need a strong majority in the Senate to force such an action, to discuss the AUMF. Until then, small-time dictators will continue to have access to the world's most powerful marionette, and we will all suffer the consequences.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, let me say that I, along with I think most Americans, am grateful that in the rocket attacks launched last night by Iran, there were no American casualties. I think I, like most of our colleagues here in the Senate, I hope, will have an opportunity later today to hear from the administration about the state of events there and what the plans are going forward.

We all know it is a dangerous part of the world. It has been that way for decades. The Iranian influence there is a

malign influence that has put at risk and in jeopardy not only American lives but lives of countless people throughout that region.

Mr. Soleimani, who was removed in the last few days, of course, was responsible for hundreds of American deaths. His loss is something that I think people not only in this country but certainly people in that region of the world benefit from because he will no longer be able to conduct and operate and commit terrorist attacks and bring about death to people all over that region of the world.

IMPEACHMENT

Mr. President, I would also like to point out, as I think most know, and most of the reporting has reflected this, that Republicans in the Senate—and yesterday Leader MCCONNELL made the statement—are prepared to take up the Articles of Impeachment when they are delivered to us by the House of Representatives. For whatever reason—and it appears that the House Democrats under Speaker PELOSI have determined that it is to their political advantage for some reason to hang on to those articles and to perhaps game this out a little bit. We, of course, don't know what that gains them. But in any event, they have not yet, after now several weeks, decided to proceed and to bring those over here to the Senate.

I would point out that it can't be because there isn't a process in place to deal with those articles when they arrive. Obviously, what Republicans in the Senate have agreed to adopt is the Clinton precedent—in other words, the precedent that was used when President Clinton went through impeachment 21 years ago. At that time, it was good enough for all of the Democrats in the U.S. Senate—by a vote of 100 to 0, a unanimous vote in the U.S. Senate—to proceed to those articles.

All Senate Republicans are simply saying is that is a good precedent. It was good enough for Democrats and Republicans back then, and it ought to be good enough for Republicans and Democrats today.

What that simply provides for is to allow both sides—the managers in the House to come over and make their argument; the President and his team to be able to put up their defense; Senators to have an opportunity to listen to those arguments and then to propound questions, to ask questions through the Chair that could be responded to, and then, at that time, to determine whether additional information, evidence, witnesses, et cetera, could be brought forward. But as a very straightforward process—one, as I said, that met with the approval of all 100 Senators, both Democrats and Republicans, back in 1999—the Clinton precedent seems to me, at least, to be a fair way in which to proceed and one that Senate Republicans have agreed to move forward with.

If and when the House Democrats under Speaker PELOSI determine they

are ready to send those articles over here—it seems like maybe they are waiting for something to rescue what I think is an otherwise fairly weak argument they have to make, but when those articles arrive here, we will have a process in place in which to move forward and get this trial underway in the Senate and hopefully hear the arguments and at some point—I hope in the not too distant future—conclude this and get it behind us and move on to the work the American people sent us here to do.

Obviously, there is an election coming up in November. The first votes will start being cast just a few weeks from now in the States of Iowa, New Hampshire, and other States, followed very closely on by Super Tuesday. The election process is already underway, and I think that is the means by which most Americans believe we ought to deal with our leadership. In a democratic system of government, we have the opportunity as people to express our opinions and to voice our views in that manner. I hope that is where we can settle these political differences and disputes we have.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. President, while the House continues to be bogged down and stalled out over impeachment, the Senate is moving forward with the business that I think is important to the daily lives of the American people.

Yesterday, the Senate Finance Committee passed the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement out of our committee. I serve as a member of that committee. I was pleased to vote to move this agreement one step closer to final approval by the full Senate.

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement will benefit almost every sector of our economy, from manufacturing, to digital services, to the automotive industry. It will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs, boost our economic output, and increase wages for workers.

The agreement breaks new ground by including a chapter specifically focused on small and medium-sized businesses. This is the first time a U.S. trade agreement has ever included a dedicated chapter on this topic. Roughly 120,000 small and medium-sized businesses around our country export goods and services to Mexico and Canada, including a number of businesses in my home State of South Dakota. USMCA will make it easier for these businesses to successfully export their product.

South Dakota businesses and consumers will also benefit from the fact that the agreement maintains the current U.S. de minimis threshold—something I fought hard to protect.

I am also particularly excited about the benefits the USMCA will bring to farmers and ranchers. Farmers and ranchers have had a tough time over the past few years. Low commodity and livestock prices, natural disasters, and protracted trade disputes have left

farmers and ranchers in my home State of South Dakota and around the country struggling.

I spend a lot of time at home talking to farmers and ranchers. Again and again, they have emphasized to me that the most important thing Washington can do to boost our Nation's farm economy is to conclude favorable trade deals. That is why I have spent a lot of time this past year pushing for adoption of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement and why I am so pleased that after a long year waiting for the House under Speaker PELOSI to take it up and act on it, we are finally going to have the opportunity to approve that trade deal in the Senate.

Canada and Mexico are the No. 1 and No. 2 markets for American agricultural products. The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement will preserve and expand farmers' access to these two critical export markets, and it will give farmers certainty about what these markets will look like long term.

I am particularly excited about the improvements the agreement makes for dairy farmers. If you drive the I-29 corridor north of Brookings, SD, you will see firsthand the major dairy expansion South Dakota has experienced over the past several decades—I should say, over the past several years.

The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement will preserve U.S. dairy farmers' role as a key dairy supplier to Mexico, and it will substantially expand market access in Canada. In fact, the U.S. International Trade Commission estimates that the agreement will boost U.S. dairy exports by more than \$277 million. The agreement will also expand market access for U.S. poultry and egg producers. It will make it easier for U.S. producers to export wheat to Canada.

There is so much more in this agreement.

Yesterday's Finance Committee vote was a long time coming for South Dakota farmers and ranchers. Months of delay by House Democrats left agriculture producers wondering if they would ever see the benefits of this agreement. But we have at last been able to move forward, and I look forward to full Senate passage of the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement in the very near future.

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

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Matthew H. Solomson, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Crapo, Thom Tillis, Mike Rounds, Lamar Alexander, John Hoeven, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, John Thune, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Boozman, Tom Cotton, Chuck Grassley, Kevin Cramer, Steve Daines, Todd Young, John Cornyn.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Matthew H. Solomson, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 88, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 3 Ex.]

YEAS—88

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

NAYS—7

Gillibrand	Klobuchar	Wyden
Harris	Markey	
Hirono	Schumer	

NOT VOTING—5

Alexander	Perdue	Warren
Booker	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 88, the nays are 7. The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Eleni Maria Roumel, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Crapo, Thom Tillis, Mike Rounds, Lamar Alexander, John Hoeven, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, John Thune, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Boozman, Tom Cotton, Chuck Grassley, Kevin Cramer, Steve Daines, Todd Young, John Cornyn.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Eleni Maria Roumel, of Maryland, to be a Judge of United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 4 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Barrasso	Crapo	Inhofe
Blackburn	Cruz	Johnson
Blunt	Daines	Kennedy
Boozman	Enzi	Lankford
Braun	Ernst	Lee
Burr	Fischer	Loeffler
Capito	Gardner	McConnell
Cassidy	Graham	McSally
Collins	Grassley	Moran
Cornyn	Hawley	Murkowski
Cotton	Hoeven	Paul
Cramer	Hyde-Smith	Portman

Risch
Roberts
Romney
Rounds
Rubio

Sasse
Scott (FL)
Scott (SC)
Shelby
Sullivan

Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Wicker
Young

NAYS—44

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

NOT VOTING—5

Alexander	Perdue	Warren
Booker	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 44. The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Michael George DeSombre, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Thailand.

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.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Michael George DeSombre, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Thailand, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber wishing to vote or to change their vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 64, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 5 Ex.]

YEAS—64

Baldwin	Graham	Reed
Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Bennet	Hassan	Roberts
Blackburn	Hawley	Romney
Blunt	Hoehen	Rosen
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Braun	Inhofe	Rubio
Burr	Johnson	Sasse
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Leahy	Shaheen
Collins	Lee	Shelby
Cornyn	Loeffler	Sullivan
Cotton	Manchin	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Toomey
Cruz	Menendez	Udall
Daines	Moran	Whitehouse
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young
Fischer	Peters	
Gardner	Portman	

NAYS—31

Blumenthal	Harris	Schatz
Brown	Heinrich	Schumer
Cantwell	Hirono	Sinema
Carper	Jones	Smith
Casey	Kaine	Stabenow
Coons	King	Tester
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Markey	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	
Gillibrand	Murray	

NOT VOTING—5

Alexander	Perdue	Warren
Booker	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 64, the nays are 31.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Michael George DeSombre, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Thailand.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

IRAN

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday evening, Iran launched more than a dozen ballistic missiles against military bases in Iraq, which house U.S. troops.

After General Qasem Soleimani was killed in a targeted drone strike late last week in an act of self-defense and to deter further aggression against America and our allies, our forces were on high alert for an Iranian attack. President Trump and our military leaders emphasized that we would be prepared for whatever response Iran chose to deliver, and by all accounts we were.

If the present circumstances hold, it appears that no U.S. servicemembers were harmed during this attack last night by Iran, which is the best outcome we could have hoped for. In addition,

I am glad no Iraqi troops appear to have been injured or killed in this strike as well.

While the result of this provocation by Iran could have been a lot worse, it does not diminish the fact that the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism has a sophisticated and capable ballistic program. We know that those capabilities only accelerated under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action—the so-called nuclear deal during the previous administration—as has the regime's pursuit of their nuclear aspirations.

I am confident that this administration's maximum-pressure campaign, combined with our unparalleled military capabilities, as well as the President's decisive actions that have culminated in the airstrike last week, have prevented a much worse outcome from this attack by Iran.

Last week, I had the opportunity to visit Strategic Command, STRATCOM, in Omaha, NE, where their motto is "strategic deterrence." I think that is an important goal to keep in mind; that is, having the means and capabilities not only of hitting back but a message of deterrence to our adversaries to dissuade them from initiating hostilities in the first place.

President Ronald Reagan had his own notion of strategic deterrence. He called it "peace through strength." I believe that is something the President's actions last week have begun to restore, no less a luminary than former GEN David Petraeus, who said, after the Soleimani attack, that perhaps—just perhaps—this would reestablish deterrence. Indeed, based on the response by the Iranian regime last night, where they obviously targeted uninhabited areas, and they wanted to save face by showing that they were doing something to retaliate but not wanting to escalate, I think General Petraeus is right on. What has happened, to this point, is reestablishing some level of deterrence.

I applaud the President for speaking to the American people this morning and making it clear that, under his watch, Iran will never ever have a nuclear weapon. In my view, this is the single most important policy objective for the United States and our allies in the Middle East.

Deterrence through strength, combined with additional economic sanctions, are designed to encourage and persuade the Iranian regime to rejoin the community of nations, which will help pave the way for a better way of life for the Iranian people and to give up these tools of terror which have characterized the Iranian regime since 1979, since the revolution—exporting that terror to other countries. There was no one more responsible for doing that than General Soleimani, who was taken out in an airstrike last week.

As we move forward, the United States and our allies can't turn back. We can't relieve this maximum-pressure campaign, and we also must re-

main cognizant of the dangers of creating power vacuums in the Middle East.

I also hope our allies in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom will work with us to persuade the U.N. to invoke the snapback provisions under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to restore international sanctions and restrictions on the Iranian regime to further persuade them to join us in negotiations, which will lead to a better outcome for all. It will be helpful if our friends and allies in the UK, France, and Germany will join us in that effort.

While the United States has not purposely sought out further conflict that could lead to an unnecessary loss of life, we need to defend—we must always defend American personnel and our interests in the Middle East.

As the President has pointed out this morning, one of the things that, historically, has given Presidents like Jimmy Carter the determination to declare the blocking of the Strait of Hormuz as an act of war during his administration was our overdependence on energy from the Middle East. As the President pointed out this morning, thanks to the creativity and innovation in places like Oklahoma, Texas, North Dakota, and elsewhere, we are now largely energy independent and self-sufficient. We can now use this as a tool to engage other countries that are completely dependent on countries like Russia, Iran, and others in the Middle East for their energy needs. So this is changing the geopolitics of the world. This is not just the President taking a divisive action against the leading master of terrorism in the Middle East; the geopolitics of the world have shifted, and I hope we will all work together to take advantage of that.

As I said, I appreciate the President's courage and leadership. This must have been no easy decision, to be sure. I continue to be proud of our military leadership and the rank-and-file servicemembers who have worked so hard to protect the United States and our national interests in the Middle East and around the world.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. President, on another matter, I spoke last week on the Senate floor about some of the great things that have been accomplished this last year for our country, including my home State of Texas.

I pointed out that we notched a number of wins for the American military as well as our veterans. We sent much needed assistance to communities devastated by natural disasters, like Hurricane Harvey and others. We confirmed more qualified judges to the Federal bench. We invested heavily in securing America's elections from the sort of interference we saw occur in the last Presidential election, and I am proud to say we strengthened our fight to end the rape kit backlog.

We made strides, big and small, to improve the lives of the American people, and I am eager to add more wins to that list this year.

Unfortunately, Congress is starting this year in a rather inauspicious way, not designed to regain the confidence of the American people and our ability to do what benefits them as opposed to satisfying some partisan political interest.

High on that list of pretty embarrassing developments are the Articles of Impeachment that the House passed. Three weeks after the House said this urgent matter must be pushed through to protect the country and defend the Constitution, Speaker PELOSI is still refusing to send those Articles of Impeachment to the Senate, and we are waiting. Now, I would be happy if she never sent the Articles of Impeachment here and realizes the error of the House's ways, but I don't expect that to happen.

In the meantime, we are going to continue to confirm well-qualified nominees, as we are today, and hopefully we will be able to do work on the USMCA—the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement—which, as the Presiding Officer knows, we voted out of the Senate Finance Committee yesterday but which has to clear six other committees before it is ready for floor action. Hopefully, we will be able to get that done sooner rather than later.

With an impending impeachment trial consuming most of the oxygen here in Washington, there is not a lot of opportunity, let alone political will, to get actual legislating done.

There is a laundry list of bills we could add to our accomplishments in 2020, but there is an opportunity cost when we are squandering our time on this ill-considered impeachment mania. The time and effort we are spending on that could well be used to pass these other pieces of legislation, but these pieces of legislation wait in impeachment purgatory.

At the top of my list this year is legislation to bring down healthcare costs to the American people, particularly out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs—something I thought was a high priority for Members on both sides of the aisle as well as the White House.

Over the summer, the Senate Judiciary, Finance, and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committees passed bipartisan bills which deal with everything from high prescription drug prices to surprise medical billing. While we knew there was still additional work that needed to be done, everyone was somewhat optimistic that we could pass some combination of these bills by the end of last year. Unfortunately, that didn't happen.

Negotiations are continuing, but I had hoped we could make progress on some noncontroversial bills in the meantime, like the one I introduced to stop drugmakers from gaming the patent system.

I just read this morning that the manufacturer of HUMIRA, which is an

incredible drug and the most widely prescribed drug in America, is raising their list price by 7 percent. This is a drug that has generic competitors overseas, but they are not approved here in the United States because HUMIRA has gamed the patent system by acquiring more than 120 different patents on this drug, the same one that is being sold cheaper and more widely available in Europe.

The bill I introduced with Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the Senator from Connecticut, to deal with that is called the Affordable Prescriptions for Patients Act. It strikes a delicate balance of protecting innovation while increasing competition. It would be a win for every American who has felt the sticker shock at the pharmacy. This bill is a modest bill, but it represents real progress. Bipartisan support—check that box. I introduced this bill with Senator BLUMENTHAL from Connecticut, as I mentioned, and I am proud to have the support of the minority whip as well as the ranking member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. This passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously.

Well, does it increase the deficit? No, it actually helps the deficit, so we can check that box. The Congressional Budget Office estimates the bill would save the government more than half a billion dollars over the next decade, not to mention what it might do to private insurance costs.

During simpler times, this bill would have been quickly approved by the Senate and sent to the House for their consideration and the President's signature. If we have learned anything these last few years, it is that nothing is simple here in Congress or in Washington.

So, after waiting for months, I came to the Senate floor to ask that the bill be passed. After all, it sailed through the process, and I hadn't heard a single Senator with any substantive objection to the bill. That is when the Democratic leader, the Senator from New York, came down here to block it, and he did it not once but twice. He didn't object on substance. In fact, he admitted it was a good bill. As I said, it checks every box when it comes to good legislation, so it certainly wasn't because it fell short there.

The only reason the Democratic leader objected to this legislation on two separate occasions is because of politics. He has chosen to participate in political games with a bill that is noncontroversial and straightforward, which would stop Big Pharma from abusing the patent system to increase their profits and increase prices to consumers.

At a time when he views his most critical priority as minority leader to oppose the President and, in turn, Senate Republicans, he couldn't stand to see a bill introduced by a Republican actually advance and become law. I am sure his constituents in New York

can't be too happy about that because they are paying the high price of patent gamesmanship too. I can guarantee you that Big Pharma is rejoicing over his obstruction.

Well, as I said just this last week, big drug companies have already begun to announce their price increases. According to their analysis, 445 different drugs have had their prices raised already by an average of 5 percent, and we are only 1 week into the new year.

It is particularly maddening that even consensus legislation is getting caught up in this hyperpartisan environment. But I am hoping that, once this looming impeachment trial is behind us, we can find a way to work together and make some progress.

Another bill that I am anxious to see pass this year is a reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which again has gotten caught up in partisan gamesmanship. Last year the House passed an ultrapartisan bill, which both parties knew would be dead on arrival in the Senate. Our friends, the House Democrats, chose to include a variety of poison pills in order to prove a point and perhaps gain some political advantage rather than to actually get a bill to the President's desk.

Well, that is where Senator FEINSTEIN, the Senator from California, and Senator ERNST, the Senator from Iowa, to their credit, tried long and hard to try to come up with a bill that we could take up here on the Senate floor, but all of a sudden, late in the game, our friends across the aisle walked away from the negotiating table and chose to introduce a near replica of the House's partisan piece of legislation.

Unfortunately, they succumbed to the politics of the moment rather than solving the problem that would actually help support victims of violence and reauthorize that legislation. Despite our Democratic colleagues leaving those negotiations, though, our colleague from Iowa, Senator ERNST, continued to work in good faith on a bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, and I am proud to be a cosponsor.

I urge the majority leader to put that piece of legislation on the floor and to do it at the earliest possible moment so that we can have a vote, we can have a debate, we can offer amendments, but we can actually get the job done rather than continuing to use this as a political football. It sends more funding and resources than the bill that the Democrats have proposed, and it authorizes the program for twice as long.

It is not just an alternative; it is a better choice for victims of sexual assault and violence. It includes a whole lot more than funding, though. It addresses a number of horrific crimes that are being committed against women and girls around the country, which are not included in our Democrat colleagues' version.

I regret that we were unable to pass a reauthorization for the Violence

Against Women Act, and I hope our colleagues across the aisle will reconsider and come back to the negotiating table and work with us so that we can finally reauthorize this program.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. President, finally, another priority that I alluded to a moment ago that I hope we can get to soon is to pass the USMCA, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which will succeed NAFTA and guide our trading relationships with Mexico and Canada into the future.

NAFTA has been a boon for our economy—especially in my State, in Texas—but it is time to bring this more than quarter-century-old agreement into the 21st century. That is precisely what the USMCA will do. It modernizes trade with our northern and southern neighbors and lays the foundation for better economies, more jobs, and greater prosperity for each of our countries.

The process of getting that bill across the Senate floor has been more than a year in the making, but we are making some progress, as I indicated, starting yesterday in the Senate Finance Committee. It was reported out with a bipartisan vote of 25 for and 3 against.

I haven't been shy about expressing my concerns about how this process has played out, especially cutting the Senate out of its negotiating position under trade promotion authority, but I do believe, on net, that this agreement is beneficial and will support it.

So I look forward to getting an opportunity, presumably once Speaker PELOSI sends the Articles of Impeachment over here and it meets its expected fate. Nobody I know expects 67 Senators to vote to convict and to remove President Trump based on the thin gruel presented by the two Articles of Impeachment that were voted on by the House in an ultrapartisan manner.

Once we get past all of that, I hope we can continue along the series of wins for our country in 2020, and I, for one, am eager to work on that. I hope we will be able to chart a path forward on an impeachment trial in the near future so that we can begin focusing on this legislation that will help the American people over the next 12 months and not squander a minute more than absolutely necessary.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

SENATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I listened carefully to the comments by my colleague from Texas, Senator CORNYN, when he talked about impeachment purgatory and the fact that the Senate is unable to act on critical legislation—many bills that have already passed the House of Representatives—because of the impeachment proceedings.

Well, the impeachment proceedings have not started in the U.S. Senate. So

what is the excuse? Was it the impeachment proceeding that stopped us from considering one bill in the Senate this week? Was it the impeachment proceeding that stopped us from considering one bill in the Senate last week? No, it was the conscious decision of the Senate majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, with the Republican majority, not to call a single piece of legislation in the last 2 weeks.

There shouldn't be any surprise among the membership that we did nothing in the last 2 weeks other than a few garden-variety nominations. The fact is, we have done nothing for a long time under Senator MCCONNELL's leadership. Do you know, for the record, how many amendments were actually debated on the floor of the U.S. Senate last year in the entire calendar year? Twenty-two. Twenty-two amendments, six offered by the junior Senator from Kentucky. If I am not mistaken, all of them were defeated, but the point I am trying to make is, 22 amendments in 1 year and now the Republican majority is blaming Speaker PELOSI and the impeachment proceedings for the fact that we do nothing. It doesn't make sense, and it doesn't add up.

We are doing nothing because that is the strategy of Senator MCCONNELL. The House of Representatives has passed hundreds—not a dozen, hundreds—of bills for the Senate to consider, on every imaginable topic: issues relating to healthcare, which we heard about from the Senator from Texas; issues relating to immigration. The litany is long. Within that litany, you would think that Senator MCCONNELL could find one bill—just one—from the House of Representatives to debate on the floor of the U.S. Senate, but we don't do that in the Senate. We no longer debate under Senator MCCONNELL's leadership.

Some people look at this room and call it the Senate Chamber. That is true; it is the Senate Chamber. Now, sadly, it is more the Senate storage facility. We store on the floor of the Senate Chamber the desks of former Senators who actually legislated on the floor of the Senate. It is not a museum because there is still some active business underway, but it is a storage facility.

These desks, if they could only speak, would tell the stories of men and women who stood up on the floor and debated critical issues. I was here for some of it. Issues of war and peace—we don't take those up anymore. If a President wants to go to war in Iran, obviously, his party thinks that we shouldn't interfere with his thought process, though the Constitution states clearly we are supposed to interfere. Congress has the authority, under the Constitution, to declare war.

When issues would come up before us—important issues—in the past, we would debate them at length, whether it was health insurance for Americans, whether we were talking about ques-

tions of the disabled in America being active participants in our society, a time when Senators from both sides of the aisle stood up in this Chamber and, in a lengthy debate, passed the Americans with Disabilities Act. One was Senator Bob Dole, a disabled veteran from World War II and Republican leader; another was Tom Harkin, a Democrat from Iowa. The two of them had a bipartisan measure and a real fulsome debate that doesn't happen on this floor of this Senate Chamber anymore.

For Senators to come here and blame NANCY PELOSI, the Speaker of the House, for our inactivity is laughable. We have failed to move forward because the leadership does not want to call the bill. Senator MCCONNELL has the authority to decide what we will debate on the floor of the U.S. Senate, and he has decided we will debate nothing—nothing.

What a wasted opportunity. If America was just picture-perfect from sea to shining sea, you would say: Well, there is no reason. We don't need a Senate or a House. We know better. There are important issues we should address, issues related to challenges facing families across America; issues of the mounting student debt across this country and what it has meant to hundreds of thousands of young people and their future; the issues involving gun violence in this country, where we still have mass killings yet can't even pass one bill to keep guns out of the hands of convicted felons and people who are mentally unstable; the issue of healthcare.

I certainly agree with the Senator from Texas when it comes to the cost of prescription drugs, the No. 1 concern of families across this country. All Senator SCHUMER has asked for is that we bring this measure to the floor and let Senator CORNYN's good idea be brought to the floor with Senator DURBIN's good idea—and perhaps other Senators' good ideas—and actually have a debate right here on the floor of the Senate. It would be amazing. People would be tuned in all across America saying: You can't imagine; the Senate is alive; it is actually considering measures.

Although, we don't. Twenty-two amendments in one calendar year—it is just amazing that we have reached that point.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

Mr. President, I come to the floor to address three specific issues. One of the first is a matter that I didn't know would actually be part of my responsibility as a Senator, but over the years my staff came to me and talked to me about political prisoners in far-flung nations around the world, men and women literally in jail because they are exercising their right to speak, to be journalists, to assemble, to run for political office.

My staff said: They are forgotten. Nobody knows they are there. They languish in prisons for months and

years and sometimes die there. Nobody even mentions their name. Would you consider coming to the floor of the Senate and saying something, perhaps writing a letter to the Embassy of the country where they are being held prisoner?

I was skeptical as to whether or not that would even be worth the effort, but I have learned over the years it is. I have come to the Senate floor to raise the cases of political prisoners around the world, typically journalists or activists who found themselves jailed for defending basic freedoms we take for granted.

In some cases, with the help of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, we have seen the release of some of these prisoners. Others still languish.

I bring their pictures to the floor because mentioning their names is important, but seeing them tells a story too. Raif Badawi and Waleed Abulkhair, in Saudi Arabia, and interim Venezuelan President Guaido's chief of staff Roberto Marrero continue to languish unjustly in prison. We continue to press for their release.

I always thought that trying to secure the release of political prisoners was worthwhile because it spoke to our values as Americans. I have had a chance to meet some of them after they were released.

It is an amazing feeling after someone has spent years—literally years—in prison and comes to my office in the Capitol and breaks down in tears in gratitude. It reminds me that they shouldn't be forgotten, and neither should many others.

Unfortunately, this President is too comfortable with these autocratic leaders who imprison people around the world. I wish he weren't.

That brings me to the Philippines, one of our key democratic allies in Asia. Over the Christmas break, I thought my friends were joking with me when they came to me and said: Well, I guess you will not be going to the Philippines soon. I didn't know what they were talking about.

It turns out that in my home State, in Illinois, there are many Filipino Americans. It is one of the largest immigrant groups coming to our country. What an incredible population Filipino Americans are. As I have come to know them, they have strong family values and strong religious values, and they are hard-working folks. They open these little shops and sit in them for 16 hours or 18 hours a day because that is the way an immigrating Filipino sets the stage for their son and daughter to have a better life.

Over the holiday recess, the President of the Philippines, President Duterte, announced that he was banning Senator PATRICK LEAHY of Vermont, as well as myself and Senator ED MARKEY of Massachusetts, from ever visiting the Philippines. I was kind of shocked to see that. I didn't expect that.

What precipitated this reaction? He also, incidentally, threatened to re-

strict the travel of all Americans to the Philippines. For some time, several of us, including Senator LEAHY and Senator MARKEY, have been advocating for the release of Filipina Senator Leila de Lima. Senator de Lima was a former head of the National Human Rights Commission of the Philippines and an internationally recognized human rights champion critical of President Duterte's extrajudicial killings.

What did that lead to? Her arrest and her being sentenced and imprisoned for up to 3 years in jail for speaking out against the current President of the Philippines.

Here is a photo of her being taken to court after she was arrested a little over 3 years ago.

Who is behind her release? Not just Senators LEAHY, DURBIN, and MARKEY and many of our colleagues, but also Amnesty International, the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, and the Raoul Wallenberg Center.

Let me read an excerpt from the letter she sent me.

As you can imagine, I may be the one currently in detention, but I am not the only victim suffering in this situation . . . so are the victims of extrajudicial killings and their families, so are all defenders of human rights . . . and ultimately, so are all of us all over the world who defend democracy and rule of law.

Senator MARKEY has a resolution calling for Senator de Lima's release and an end to the harassment of Filipina journalist Maria Ressa, which I am proud to cosponsor and hope will pass the Senate soon.

Last year, Senator LEAHY joined me in an amendment to the State and Foreign Operations bill, denying U.S. visas to those involved in Senator de Lima's politically motivated incarceration. It was our little measure in that appropriations bill that led President Duterte to ban us from ever traveling to the Philippines. There is an easy and honorable way forward. The Duterte regime should stop threatening the travel of Filipino Americans and so many others who travel between our nations and, instead, ensure a quick and credible trial for Senator de Lima or simply do the right thing and release her.

In the end, her freedom and the end of government harassment of journalists like Maria Ressa will be important tests of whether the cherished democratic norms we share with our long-standing Filipino allies will be respected by President Duterte.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. President, trade agreements are controversial. They come before the Senate and the House infrequently and are usually very hard to pass. It takes months and months of work. One of those trade agreements, which is known as the USMCA, or the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or NAFTA 2.0, is one that I have watched carefully. I voted for the original

NAFTA agreement when I was a Member of the House of Representatives. It was not a popular vote among many people in Illinois, but I felt that it was the right thing to do. I felt that moving the Mexican economy forward, watching it mature, with the creation of a middle class, would mean that it would be a more stable nation and a nation that would consume many goods produced in the United States.

That happened, but it happened at an expense, too, to be very honest. Many companies in the United States saw the low wage rates in Mexico, closed their plants in places like Galesburg, IL, and moved operations to Mexico. Some moved to China and other places.

That displacement of jobs was painful. It was hard to explain to families that this was a transition that ultimately was for the good of all nations involved. If it was your family, you didn't care about the good of a nation. You wanted to know if dad had a job.

The pain we went through over the last 25 years led me into this conversation about the USMCA with some skepticism. I didn't want to be behind any effort that would ultimately result in more American jobs being lost unnecessarily. I am proud to say that this negotiation, unlike many things in this town, turned out to be a bipartisan success.

President Trump presented us with an original version of the USMCA, and many of us took exception to some of its contents. I was particularly worried about one provision in there relating to the price of prescription drugs and some other provisions in the original measure. Then, a fulsome negotiation took place. Democrats and Republicans sat down. The net result was a positive thing. Just this last week, the Senate Finance Committee reported this USMCA by a vote of 25 to 3. I believe this bill—this new measure, this new NAFTA—enjoys broad bipartisan support.

This morning, I went on a conference call with the agriculture leaders of Illinois. I am proud to say we have one of the strongest agricultural States in the Nation and some of the best women and men who farm our land and produce food and fiber for people to consume all across America and around the world. They have gone through some very tough times. The President's trade problems with China have hurt us especially. Our soybean producers have seen a 93-percent decline in their exports of soybeans and soybean products from the State of Illinois. They have paid heavily for the decision in this administration to cut back on renewable fuels and to issue waivers to oil companies so they don't have to blend them in the fuel they sell us at gas stations.

They have seen the decline in the net foreign income, an increase in foreign debt, and we have sent aid payments to them, which they reluctantly accept as just the only lifeline they have to keep their farms in the family.

They are happy to see that we are moving forward on this new trade agreement. A new NAFTA—the USMCA—means the top trading partners of the State of Illinois, Mexico and Canada, will have a new lease on a relationship that can improve as we increase trade among our nations. The three nations will prosper. Our bounty, which we produce in the farmlands of Illinois, will be shared with Mexico, Canada, and many nations far beyond them. It is a step forward for us.

I am glad it was done on a bipartisan basis, and I am particularly happy to see the overwhelming majority of labor organizations in my State of Illinois and in the Nation support the USMCA. It is great to have both labor and business and farm communities together in this effort.

It is far from perfect. This is a bill that moves in the right direction, and I hope we bring it up for consideration and a vote very soon on the floor of the Senate.

E-CIGARETTES

Mr. President, for many years, I have had a battle on with the tobacco lobby. It is personal. I lost my father to lung cancer when I was 14 and he was 53. I watched and stood by his bedside for literally 100 days as he languished and ultimately died from lung cancer. He smoked two packs of cigarettes a day.

When I came to the U.S. House of Representatives, I was determined to try to do something about the deaths that were being caused by tobacco products across America. I proposed a measure, which seemed pretty modest at the time, that banned smoking on airplane flights. It was an inconvenience and a mess to get on a plane with the so-called smoking and nonsmoking sections. So I thought: Let's get rid of it once and for all.

It was quite a battle in the House of Representatives. We passed it by a handful of votes, to ban smoking on airplanes. Luckily, I found a great colleague and friend, former Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey, who took up the cause on the floor of the Senate, and we banned smoking on airplanes over 25 years ago.

I didn't know that it was anything more than elimination of an inconvenience while people took airplane flights. It turned out to be much more. It turned out to be a tipping point. People across America said: If it is unhealthy to breathe in second-hand smoke on an airplane, how about trains? How about buses? How about offices? How about hospitals? How about restaurants?

At the end of the day, we know what happened. If someone walked into your home or your place of business and lit up a cigarette, you would look at them and think: Where are you from? We don't do that anymore.

We certainly don't do it without asking permission. But that is what has happened in America.

We had to fight the tobacco lobby every step of the way, and we have had

some success. The number of young people who were using tobacco cigarette products declined dramatically, from over 20 percent to around 8 percent. We were winning the battle because these tobacco companies were recruiting our kids at an early age with a nicotine addiction they couldn't shake later in life.

Guess what happened. The tobacco companies invented a new product that is called e-cigarette, or vaping. If you think I am making this connection up, take a look at the largest vendor of vaping devices, JUUL, and look at the major shareholder of JUUL. It turns out to be Altria, which also turns out to be a major tobacco company.

Now the tobacco companies have decided that since kids don't gravitate toward tobacco cigarettes, they will give them an alternative. The alternative is an e-cigarette, or a vaping device.

You know what has happened, Mr. President, in your State and in my mine? High school kids are taking up this vaping addiction in numbers unimaginable. The latest report suggests that almost 29 percent of high school students across the United States are currently vaping. What they are doing is using pods and flavor pods with nicotine included and using an electronic device to inhale this vapor and blow it out. Unfortunately, in inhaling it into their lungs, they are also inhaling nicotine and developing a terrible addiction.

Students from New York came to my office a few weeks ago, and they said: Senator, don't kid yourself. It is not 28 or 29 percent. It is over 50 percent of students who are vaping today, and they are desperate to buy these flavor pods and to buy these new JUUL devices. When the teacher in a classroom steps out, they are all vaping, right there in the classroom. They do it in the restrooms and the classrooms and the cafeterias and outside the schools. They are doing desperate things to be able to afford these devices.

On September 11 of this year, President Trump and the First Lady held a press conference in the Oval Office. Though I have been critical of this President for many things, I applauded what they said. They recognized this vaping crisis, and they said that we are going to stop it and that we are going to make the moves necessary to make sure that these flavor pods that are enticing children are finally taken from the market.

I couldn't believe my ears when I heard it. Here was President Trump stepping up to do the right thing. Perhaps he and his wife, as a father and a mother of a teenager, understand this better than some. But whatever the reason, whatever the motivation, they came forward with what I thought was the best proposal: End the flavor pods once and for all.

After they made their announcements, the vaping industry went to work. They started buying ads on

FOX—naturally, that is where the President watches television—and they started saying to the people that it was unfair to take away these flavor pods.

Sadly, these flavor pods, when you look at them very closely, are just an enticement for young people to use this product.

Now the vaping industry tries to argue: Well, wait a minute. People who want tobacco cigarettes ought to have vaping as an alternative. It is safer.

Well, marginally it may be, if that were the end of the story. But it turns out that vaping device is also becoming an enticement for young people to use flavor pods and to develop this addiction to nicotine of vaping devices. It is impossible to argue that some veteran smoker of tobacco products is going to be enticed to vaping if he can buy candy flavors, bubble gum flavors, fruit flavors, or other flavors. Can you imagine some 50-year-old who has been smoking Marlboro for years, and says: Man, if I could just get my hands on some Unicorn milk flavor pods, I would give up tobacco and move to e-cigarettes.

We know better. These pods are designed to entice children.

(Mr. ROMNEY assumed the chair.)

We waited to see what would happen after the President's September announcement. We were lucky to have one of our own colleagues, from the State of Utah, who has now taken the Chair, who was present at the meeting with the President on the issue of vaping. I salute him for his friendship and leadership on this issue.

Last week, after delays, President Trump finally announced a plan to ban some of the e-cigarette flavors that are hooking our kids on nicotine. Within 30 days, some flavored e-cigarette pods and cartridges will be removed from the market. This is an important step, but it is not nearly enough. For instance, menthol pods are exempt, so I am afraid kids are just going to move to JUUL's menthol flavor. Further, liquid e-cigarette flavors that are used in open-tank vaping shops are also exempt. The vaping shops are still in business, unaffected by this new policy of the administration. Liquid nicotine is sold in flavors like Gummy Bear, Whip Cream, Sugar Cookie, and Unicorn Milk. These flavors, definitely intended for kids, will stay under President Trump's new policy.

This week's announcement is not what the President said would happen in the Oval Office a few months ago. That is why the public health community and this Senator are so disappointed. We know the President decided to water down the e-cigarette flavor ban. Heavy lobbying by Big Tobacco and Big Vape were behind it. When announcing this new restriction, President Trump said some words that may tell the story. He said:

We have to protect our families. At the same time, it's a big industry. We want to protect the industry.

Protect the vaping industry? It makes sense why these companies

wanted the President to backtrack on his promise. They make a lot of money off our kids. They addict them, and the kids spend money because of the addiction. Why doesn't it make sense for the President to stand up to Big Tobacco and Big Vaping on behalf of our kids across America?

The fight is not over. Fewer than 4 percent of adults use e-cigarettes, while 30 percent, at least, of high school kids across America are using them. Now the FDA—with a new leader, Dr. Stephen Hahn—has to come off the sidelines and do their job to protect the kids. By court order, all e-cigarette companies will have to submit applications to the Food and Drug Administration in May if they want to keep their devices and flavors on the market. If they do not submit an application in May, they will have to come off the market immediately. The FDA must enforce this fully. For companies that do submit an application, the FDA has up to 1 year to decide whether they stay in the market. The FDA must reject the applications of any vaping products that are clearly designed to appeal to children, period. And if they are significantly used by children, they should be taken off the market.

I have told Commissioner Hahn that the FDA must evaluate these applications based on science, not anecdotes. What matters is that e-cigarette companies prove their health claims, which, to date, they have never been able to do. Do e-cigarettes actually help smokers quit cigarettes? Are they actually safe? Or are they, in fact, hooking children on nicotine? Those are the important questions that should be answered with science, not with politics.

There are ways to preserve e-cigarette access for adult smokers without allowing an entire generation of kids to be hooked on nicotine. This means getting rid of all of the flavors, taking illegal products off the market immediately, and rejecting e-cigarette applications that fail to show a strong public health benefit.

To date, the FDA has not been as active or aggressive as it should. For the sake of our children and the families who love them, it is time for the FDA to get off the sidelines and make sure that we do everything in our power, including in Congress, to make certain that this epidemic—and the FDA came up with the word—this epidemic of e-vaping and e-cigarettes comes to an end in America.

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.

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

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

NOMINATION OF ELENI MARIA ROUMEL

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, for 3 years now, I have been hard at work

alongside an administration that prioritizes filling vacancies on the Federal bench with smart, dedicated, constitutionalist judges. When I am at home in Tennessee, that is what people tell me they want to see—constitutionalist judges, not activist judges.

I know that I have sounded like a broken record in my reiterating just how important it is to keep these judicial nominations moving through the Committee on the Judiciary and moving to the floor, but I will tell you this: I think it is a message that needs to be repeated day in and day out because the American people and, as I said, Tennesseans know that this should be a priority, for this is how we continue to protect freedoms from generation to generation.

Since 2017, we have confirmed over 180 nominees, and even in the face of partisan bickering, we have no plans at all to slow that pace. We were in the Committee on the Judiciary today, hearing again from the nominees whom we will move forward and bring to this floor for confirmation. I want to shine light on a court that doesn't get a whole lot of attention, but let me tell you that we would be in real trouble if we did not have this one.

I have come to the floor to support President Trump's latest nominee to the U.S. Court of Federal Claims—Eleni Maria Roumel.

I first met Eleni when she joined the nonpartisan Office of General Counsel for the House of Representatives. During her 6-year tenure, Eleni advised those of us who were members of the Energy and Commerce Committee as we faced some challenging and high-profile legal matters and as we looked at laws that were going to affect the American people and how they lived their lives every single day.

The Energy and Commerce Committee in the House has wide jurisdiction. Of course, energy policy, commerce and trade, healthcare, manufacturing, pro sports, privacy, and the internet all come under that jurisdiction. So Eleni served us well in providing advice. I witnessed her commitment to bipartisanship as she served both sides of the aisle with the same quality of representation. She did it all while she was pregnant with her son, John, who is now 2 years old, and as someone who has been a working mom, I know the challenges that this presents.

From her time as a truly excellent student at Tulane Law, to her work in the private sector and beyond, Eleni's professionalism has elevated her above the rest of the pack.

She practiced intellectual property law and earned a promotion to partner as she represented both pro bono clients and publicly traded Fortune 500 companies.

She taught and mentored students as an adjunct professor at Charleston Law School.

She solidified her reputation as a lawyer committed to the rule of law in

her work handling government oversight of Federal agencies. These cases were vital to the safeguarding of the separation of powers and emphasized the supremacy of the Constitution as what it is—the law of the land.

In her 19-year career, she has appeared before 20 different Federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, and just last year, she was elevated to the role of Deputy Counsel to Vice President MIKE PENCE.

I am truly honored to have supported Eleni Roumel's nomination to the Court of Federal Claims. She will be an excellent role model on the bench, especially to young women in the legal profession. I encourage my colleagues to take a look at her resume, get to know her, and then join me in wholeheartedly supporting her confirmation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MEASURE REFERRED—S. 3155

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I send a bill to the desk and ask that it be appropriately referred.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will be received and appropriately referred.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 3155 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. COLLINS. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

CONGRATULATING THE PEOPLE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND THE PEOPLE OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC ON THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VELVET REVOLUTION, THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FORMATION OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC, AND THE 101ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 337, S. Res. 343.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 343) congratulating the people of the Czech Republic and the people of the Slovak Republic on the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, the 26th anniversary of the formation of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic, and the 101st anniversary of the declaration of independence of Czechoslovakia.

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

Mrs. FISCHER. I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 343) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of September 26, 2019, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

CELEBRATING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL, THE REUNIFICATION OF BOTH GERMANY AND EUROPE, AND THE SPREAD OF DEMOCRACY AROUND THE WORLD

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 340, S. Res. 385.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 385) celebrating the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of both Germany and Europe, and the spread of democracy around the world.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment, and with an amendment to the preamble to insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

S. RES. 385

Whereas November 9, 2019, marks the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall,

one of the most visible symbols of communism and the "Iron Curtain" that divided Europe, which led to the reunification of Germany;

Whereas, beginning with the Russian Revolution of 1917, communist governments around the world denied freedom to and persecuted their citizens for most of the 20th century, resulting in the deaths of up to 100,000,000 people;

Whereas, in the aftermath of World War II, the Soviet Union established control over countries in Central and Eastern Europe and further increased its power through the foundation of the Warsaw Pact military alliance between the Soviet Union, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania;

Whereas the Soviet Union blockade of West Berlin in the summer of 1948 left West Berliners with only one month's worth of provisions;

Whereas, in what became known as the "Berlin Airlift", the United States and United Kingdom responded to the blockade by airlifting 2,325,809 tons of food and supplies during 277,569 total flights into West Berlin;

Whereas the Soviet Union was forced to lift the blockade of West Berlin on May 12, 1949, in light of the success of the Berlin Airlift;

Whereas the Berlin Wall, built in 1961, separated communist East Germany from democratic West Germany, dividing the German people and symbolically dividing the world into democratic and authoritarian spheres;

Whereas, in West Berlin in 1963, President John F. Kennedy spoke out against the Berlin Wall and communism, declaring that "[f]reedom has many difficulties and democracy is not perfect, but we have never had to put a wall up to keep our people in, to prevent them from leaving us";

Whereas, during the 28 years of the Berlin Wall's existence, more than 75,000 people were imprisoned for attempting to leave East Germany, and more than 1,000 people are estimated to have been killed trying to escape;

Whereas Soviet forces brutally repressed demonstrations against repressive communist governments in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1980;

Whereas the United States Congress played a crucial role in the founding of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, independent and uncensored news outlets that broadcast behind the Iron Curtain and have been credited by former Russian President Boris Yeltsin and former Czech President Vaclav Havel with playing a significant role in the ending of the Cold War;

Whereas, in West Berlin in 1987, President Ronald Reagan, standing at the Brandenburg Gate, symbolically referred to both the physical wall and the division of the world and implored Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev to "tear down this Wall!";

Whereas President Reagan stated, "As long as this gate is closed, as long as this scar of a wall is permitted to stand, it is not the German question alone that remains open, but the question of freedom for all mankind.";

Whereas, on August 23, 1989, several million people across the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which were illegally annexed in 1940 by the Soviet Union, demonstrated bravery and resilience by joining hands to form a 500-kilometer long human chain to peacefully demand their independence;

Whereas, at midnight on November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall symbolically fell, and East Berliners were allowed to cross into the West;

Whereas, that night, East Berliners took pickaxes to this hated symbol of oppression, and during the following three days more than 2,000,000 people visited West Berlin from the East;

Whereas, on November 13, 1989, the United States Senate welcomed "the opening of the Berlin Wall as symbolic of the beginning of the process of reform taking place in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and throughout Eastern Europe";

Whereas, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a wave of democratic governance swept the world;

Whereas, by the summer of 1990, democratically elected governments had been formed in all former Warsaw Pact countries;

Whereas the reunification of Germany was officially declared on October 3, 1990;

Whereas the process of German reunification faced significant economic, structural, cultural, and political challenges both within Germany and in Europe and took dedicated political leaders and citizens, with the support of allied nations, over a decade to achieve;

Whereas, on December 25, 1991, the Soviet flag was lowered from over the Kremlin for the final time, replaced by the Russian flag;

Whereas Mr. Gorbachev later said, "The Soviet model was defeated not only on the economic and social levels; it was defeated on a cultural level. Our society, our people, the most educated, the most intellectual, rejected that model on the cultural level because it does not respect the man, oppresses him spiritually and politically.";

Whereas, since its reunification, Germany has become the world's fourth largest economy, has served as a leading voice in the European Union (EU), the Group of 7, and the United Nations, and has been consistently rated by Freedom House as one of the world's freest countries;

Whereas the United States and Germany share a close and multidimensional relationship, including security cooperation and an economic and trade partnership;

Whereas the United States and Germany share values of freedom, democracy, and human rights and work in tandem to support and uphold these three pillars globally;

Whereas Germany demonstrated unconditional solidarity with the United States following the September 11, 2001, attacks and leadership within NATO during the invocation of Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty in recognition that an attack on one is an attack on all;

Whereas the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall coincides with the 70th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the 15th anniversary of the European Union "Big Bang", when 10 mostly post-communist countries joined the EU's community of democracies;

Whereas many former Soviet and communist countries are prospering as a result of their democratic and economic reforms, reflected in their memberships in the EU and NATO; and

Whereas the fall of the Berlin Wall signified the end of the division of Europe and, ultimately, the triumph of democracy over communism: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall as the start of German reunification and democratic change in Eastern Europe and much of the rest of the world;

(2) values the significant efforts made by German and European citizens to reunify and reinvigorate a united Germany;

(3) recognizes Germany for its steadfast alliance and friendship with the United States, its leadership within the European Union, its commitment to democracy, rule of law, and

market-based economics, and its efforts to support these values around the world;

(4) congratulates the former communist countries of Europe for their substantial progress over the past 30 years towards strengthening their democracies, protecting human rights, combating the corruption endemic to communist regimes, transitioning to market-based economies, and resolving longstanding disputes; and

(5) reaffirms the United States commitment to supporting democratic reform, and urges these countries to continue this progress so that their democracies and economies can thrive and their people can prosper.

Mrs. FISCHER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to; that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 385) was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, was agreed to as follows:

S. RES. 385

Whereas November 9, 2019, marks the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, one of the most visible symbols of communism and the “Iron Curtain” that divided Europe, which led to the reunification of Germany;

Whereas, beginning with the Russian Revolution of 1917, communist governments around the world denied freedom to and persecuted their citizens for most of the 20th century, resulting in the deaths of up to 100,000,000 people;

Whereas, in the aftermath of World War II, the Soviet Union established control over countries in Central and Eastern Europe and further increased its power through the foundation of the Warsaw Pact military alliance between the Soviet Union, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania;

Whereas the Soviet Union blockade of West Berlin in the summer of 1948 left West Berliners with only one month’s worth of provisions;

Whereas, in what became known as the “Berlin Airlift”, the United States and United Kingdom responded to the blockade by airlifting 2,325,809 tons of food and supplies during 277,569 total flights into West Berlin;

Whereas the Soviet Union was forced to lift the blockade of West Berlin on May 12, 1949, in light of the success of the Berlin Airlift;

Whereas the Berlin Wall, built in 1961, separated communist East Germany from democratic West Germany, dividing the German people and symbolically dividing the world into democratic and authoritarian spheres;

Whereas, in West Berlin in 1963, President John F. Kennedy spoke out against the Berlin Wall and communism, declaring that “[f]reedom has many difficulties and democracy is not perfect, but we have never had to put a wall up to keep our people in, to prevent them from leaving us”;

Whereas, during the 28 years of the Berlin Wall’s existence, more than 75,000 people were imprisoned for attempting to leave East Germany, and more than 1,000 people

are estimated to have been killed trying to escape;

Whereas Soviet forces brutally repressed demonstrations against repressive communist governments in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1980;

Whereas the United States Congress played a crucial role in the founding of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, independent and uncensored news outlets that broadcast behind the Iron Curtain and have been credited by former Russian President Boris Yeltsin and former Czech President Vaclav Havel with playing a significant role in the ending of the Cold War;

Whereas, in West Berlin in 1987, President Ronald Reagan, standing at the Brandenburg Gate, symbolically referred to both the physical wall and the division of the world and implored Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev to “tear down this Wall!”;

Whereas President Reagan stated, “As long as this gate is closed, as long as this scar of a wall is permitted to stand, it is not the German question alone that remains open, but the question of freedom for all mankind.”;

Whereas, on August 23, 1989, several million people across the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which were illegally annexed in 1940 by the Soviet Union, demonstrated bravery and resilience by joining hands to form a 500-kilometer long human chain to peacefully demand their independence;

Whereas, at midnight on November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall symbolically fell, and East Berliners were allowed to cross into the West;

Whereas, that night, East Berliners took pickaxes to this hated symbol of oppression, and during the following three days more than 2,000,000 people visited West Berlin from the East;

Whereas, on November 13, 1989, the United States Senate welcomed “the opening of the Berlin Wall as symbolic of the beginning of the process of reform taking place in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and throughout Eastern Europe”;

Whereas, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a wave of democratic governance swept the world;

Whereas, by the summer of 1990, democratically elected governments had been formed in all former Warsaw Pact countries;

Whereas the reunification of Germany was officially declared on October 3, 1990;

Whereas the process of German reunification faced significant economic, structural, cultural, and political challenges both within Germany and in Europe and took dedicated political leaders and citizens, with the support of allied nations, over a decade to achieve;

Whereas, on December 25, 1991, the Soviet flag was lowered from over the Kremlin for the final time, replaced by the Russian flag;

Whereas Mr. Gorbachev later said, “The Soviet model was defeated not only on the economic and social levels; it was defeated on a cultural level. Our society, our people, the most educated, the most intellectual, rejected that model on the cultural level because it does not respect the man, oppresses him spiritually and politically.”;

Whereas, since its reunification, Germany has become the world’s fourth largest economy, has served as a leading voice in the European Union (EU), the Group of 7, and the United Nations, and has been consistently rated by Freedom House as one of the world’s freest countries;

Whereas the United States and Germany share a close and multidimensional relationship, including security cooperation and an economic and trade partnership;

Whereas the United States and Germany share values of freedom, democracy, and human rights and work in tandem to support and uphold these three pillars globally;

Whereas Germany demonstrated unconditional solidarity with the United States following the September 11, 2001, attacks and leadership within NATO during the invocation of Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty in recognition that an attack on one is an attack on all;

Whereas the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall coincides with the 70th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the 15th anniversary of the European Union “Big Bang”, when 10 mostly post-communist countries joined the EU’s community of democracies;

Whereas many former Soviet and communist countries are prospering as a result of their democratic and economic reforms, reflected in their memberships in the EU and NATO; and

Whereas the fall of the Berlin Wall signified the end of the division of Europe and, ultimately, the triumph of democracy over communism: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall as the start of German reunification and democratic change in Eastern Europe and much of the rest of the world;

(2) values the significant efforts made by German and European citizens to reunify and reinvigorate a united Germany;

(3) recognizes Germany for its steadfast alliance and friendship with the United States, its leadership within the European Union, its commitment to democracy, rule of law, and market-based economics, and its efforts to support these values around the world;

(4) congratulates the former communist countries of Europe for their substantial progress over the past 30 years towards strengthening their democracies, protecting human rights, combating the corruption endemic to communist regimes, transitioning to market-based economies, and resolving longstanding disputes; and

(5) reaffirms the United States commitment to supporting democratic reform, and urges these countries to continue this progress so that their democracies and economies can thrive and their people can prosper.

EXPRESSING SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT WIDESPREAD IRREGULARITIES IN BOLIVIA’S OCTOBER 20, 2019, GENERAL ELECTIONS AND SUPPORTING THE CONVENING OF NEW ELECTIONS IN BOLIVIA AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 341, S. Res. 447.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 447) expressing serious concern about widespread irregularities in Bolivia’s October 20, 2019, general elections and supporting the convening of new elections in Bolivia at the earliest possible date.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an

amendment to strike all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in italic, and with an amendment to the preamble to strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

S. RES. 447

Whereas Evo Morales was elected as the first indigenous president of Bolivia in 2005;

Whereas, in 2009, Bolivians approved by a vote of more than 60 percent in a nationwide referendum a new constitution that established a limit of two 5-year presidential terms and declared the country a plurinational state in order to better reflect Bolivia's dozens of ethnic groups;

Whereas, in 2009 and 2014, President Morales won re-election to a second and third term in office with more than 60 percent of the vote;

Whereas, in 2016, 51.3 percent of Bolivian voters rejected a national referendum on the proposal by the Administration of President Morales to lift presidential term limits;

Whereas, in 2017, despite the results of the 2016 national referendum, President Morales' political allies in the Bolivian Constitutional Tribunal removed presidential term limits;

Whereas, on October 20, 2019, amid existing concerns over the politicization of Bolivia's electoral commission, Bolivian voters went to the polls for general elections to choose a new president, members of the Senate, and members of the Chamber of Deputies;

Whereas, at the invitation of Morales Administration, the Organization of American States (OAS) General Secretariat sent an Electoral Observation Mission to Bolivia that was comprised of 92 experts and observers from 24 different nationalities deployed in the country's nine departments and in three countries in which Bolivian expatriates could cast their votes abroad;

Whereas, on October 20, 2019, Bolivian electoral authorities stopped reporting the preliminary vote count for a period of 20 hours, subsequently announced preliminary results that negated the need for a second-round election, and Evo Morales proclaimed himself the winner of the presidential election;

Whereas, on October 21, 2019, the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in Bolivia expressed "deep concern and surprise at the drastic and hard-to-explain change in the trend of the preliminary results revealed after the closing of the polls";

Whereas, in the aftermath of the October 20, 2019, general elections, violent protests occurred throughout Bolivia in response to electoral irregularities and the findings of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission;

Whereas, on October 30, 2019, the Morales Administration and the OAS General Secretariat signed an agreement to have the OAS conduct an audit of the integrity of the October 20, 2019, general elections;

Whereas, on November 10, 2019, an OAS technical mission issued a report on its audit of the integrity of the October 20, 2019, general elections, which included findings that—

(1) the preliminary and final election results were transmitted via a flawed computer transmission system that was accessed by unauthorized outside computer servers;

(2) there was a deficient chain of custody for and significant irregularities in the electoral tally sheets and other electoral records; and

(3) the audit team could not validate the results of the election and therefore recommended a new electoral process;

Whereas, on November 10, 2019, President Morales acknowledged the results of the OAS technical mission, announced that he would call new elections, and stated that, "new national elections will allow the Bolivian people to democratically choose new authorities with their vote";

Whereas, in the face of widespread public protests and a deteriorating security environment,

President Morales departed Bolivia on November 12, 2019, and was granted asylum by the Government of Mexico;

Whereas, on November 12, 2019, the Bolivian Constitutional Tribunal recognized an interim president of Bolivia;

Whereas the transitional government in Bolivia signed a law on November 24, 2019, stating that new elections must be held within 120 days after the election of a new Electoral Tribunal by the National Assembly;

Whereas the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) stated that protests occurring in Bolivia since the October 20, 2019, general election have left 23 people dead and more than 700 people injured; and

Whereas the IACHR has urged the Bolivian state "to adopt all measures necessary to prevent impunity, to protect the right to peaceful assembly, and to take urgent action to preserve Bolivians' lives and integrity, as well as ensuring that journalists and autonomous institutions to protect and defend human rights can do their job": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses concern about the numerous irregularities that occurred during the October 20, 2019, general elections in Bolivia;

(2) commends the efforts of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in Bolivia and supports the findings of the OAS electoral audit mission, which documented numerous irregularities during the October 2019 general elections in Bolivia;

(3) deplores the acts of violence that have occurred in Bolivia in the aftermath of the October 20, 2019, general elections and urges all Bolivians to repudiate violence and to peacefully exercise their rights of freedom of expression and assembly;

(4) urges Bolivia's transitional government to work expeditiously to establish the conditions for an inclusive, credible, transparent, and democratic elections as soon as possible in accordance with their laws and constitution;

(5) encourages the Bolivian state to protect the human rights of all persons, including indigenous groups, regardless of political affiliation, ethnicity, religion, or sex;

(6) encourages the Department of State and the U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States to provide all appropriate support to facilitate the convening of free, fair, and transparent democratic elections in Bolivia as soon as possible in accordance with their laws and constitution;

(7) encourages the Organization of American States to take all necessary steps, in accordance with the principles of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, to ensure respect for the will of Bolivian voters and the integrity of the new democratic elections in Bolivia as soon as possible in accordance with their laws and constitution; and

(8) supports the call by the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States for Bolivian authorities to ensure full respect and protection of human rights and accountability for any violation thereof.

Mrs. FISCHER. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment to the resolution be agreed to; that the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 447), as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 447

Whereas Evo Morales was elected as the first indigenous president of Bolivia in 2005;

Whereas, in 2009, Bolivians approved by a vote of more than 60 percent in a nationwide referendum a new constitution that established a limit of two 5-year presidential terms and declared the country a plurinational state in order to better reflect Bolivia's dozens of ethnic groups;

Whereas, in 2009 and 2014, President Morales won re-election to a second and third term in office with more than 60 percent of the vote;

Whereas, in 2016, 51.3 percent of Bolivian voters rejected a national referendum on the proposal by the Administration of President Morales to lift presidential term limits;

Whereas, in 2017, despite the results of the 2016 national referendum, President Morales' political allies in the Bolivian Constitutional Tribunal removed presidential term limits;

Whereas, on October 20, 2019, amid existing concerns over the politicization of Bolivia's electoral commission, Bolivian voters went to the polls for general elections to choose a new president, members of the Senate, and members of the Chamber of Deputies;

Whereas, at the invitation of Morales Administration, the Organization of American States (OAS) General Secretariat sent an Electoral Observation Mission to Bolivia that was comprised of 92 experts and observers from 24 different nationalities deployed in the country's nine departments and in three countries in which Bolivian expatriates could cast their votes abroad;

Whereas, on October 20, 2019, Bolivian electoral authorities stopped reporting the preliminary vote count for a period of 20 hours, subsequently announced preliminary results that negated the need for a second-round election, and Evo Morales proclaimed himself the winner of the presidential election;

Whereas, on October 21, 2019, the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in Bolivia expressed "deep concern and surprise at the drastic and hard-to-explain change in the trend of the preliminary results revealed after the closing of the polls";

Whereas, in the aftermath of the October 20, 2019, general elections, violent protests occurred throughout Bolivia in response to electoral irregularities and the findings of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission;

Whereas, on October 30, 2019, the Morales Administration and the OAS General Secretariat signed an agreement to have the OAS conduct an audit of the integrity of the October 20, 2019, general elections;

Whereas, on November 10, 2019, an OAS technical mission issued a report on its audit of the integrity of the October 20, 2019, general elections, which included findings that—

(1) the preliminary and final election results were transmitted via a flawed computer transmission system that was accessed by unauthorized outside computer servers;

(2) there was a deficient chain of custody for and significant irregularities in the electoral tally sheets and other electoral records; and

(3) the audit team could not validate the results of the election and therefore recommended a new electoral process;

Whereas, on November 10, 2019, President Morales acknowledged the results of the OAS technical mission, announced that he would

call new elections, and stated that, “new national elections will allow the Bolivian people to democratically choose new authorities with their vote”;

Whereas, in the face of widespread public protests and a deteriorating security environment, President Morales departed Bolivia on November 12, 2019, and was granted asylum by the Government of Mexico;

Whereas, on November 12, 2019, the Bolivian Constitutional Tribunal recognized an interim president of Bolivia;

Whereas the transitional government in Bolivia signed a law on November 24, 2019, stating that new elections must be held within 120 days after the election of a new Electoral Tribunal by the National Assembly;

Whereas the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) stated that protests occurring in Bolivia since the October 20, 2019, general election have left 23 people dead and more than 700 people injured; and

Whereas the IACHR has urged the Bolivian state “to adopt all measures necessary to prevent impunity, to protect the right to peaceful assembly, and to take urgent action to preserve Bolivians’ lives and integrity, as well as ensuring that journalists and autonomous institutions to protect and defend human rights can do their job”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses concern about the numerous irregularities that occurred during the October 20, 2019, general elections in Bolivia;

(2) commends the efforts of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in Bolivia and supports the findings of the OAS electoral audit mission, which documented numerous irregularities during the October 2019 general elections in Bolivia;

(3) deplors the acts of violence that have occurred in Bolivia in the aftermath of the October 20, 2019, general elections and urges all Bolivians to repudiate violence and to peacefully exercise their rights of freedom of expression and assembly;

(4) urges Bolivia’s transitional government to work expeditiously to establish the conditions for an inclusive, credible, transparent, and democratic elections as soon as possible in accordance with their laws and constitution;

(5) encourages the Bolivian state to protect the human rights of all persons, including indigenous groups, regardless of political affiliation, ethnicity, religion, or sex;

(6) encourages the Department of State and the U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States to provide all appropriate support to facilitate the convening of free, fair, and transparent democratic elections in Bolivia as soon as possible in accordance with their laws and constitution;

(7) encourages the Organization of American States to take all necessary steps, in accordance with the principles of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, to ensure respect for the will of Bolivian voters and the integrity of the new democratic elections in Bolivia as soon as possible in accordance with their laws and constitution; and

(8) supports the call by the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States for Bolivian authorities to ensure full respect and protection of human rights and accountability for any violation thereof.

CONDEMNING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES FOR ITS CONTINUED DETENTION OF SENATOR LEILA DE LIMA, CALLING FOR HER IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate

proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 365, Senate Res. 142.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 142) condemning the Government of the Philippines for its continued detention of Senator Leila De Lima, calling for her immediate release, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in italic and an amendment to strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

Whereas extrajudicial killings perpetrated by the Government of the Philippines as part of a government-directed antidrug campaign present the foremost human rights challenge in the Philippines;

Whereas the Department of State’s 2017 Human Rights Report notes numerous human rights concerns, including the persecution of human rights defenders and the detention of political prisoners in the Philippines, stating, “The most significant human rights issues included: killings by security forces, vigilantes and others allegedly connected to the government, and by insurgents; torture and abuse of prisoners and detainees by security forces; often harsh and life threatening prison conditions; warrantless arrests by security forces and cases of apparent government disregard for legal rights and due process; political prisoners; killings of and threats against journalists; official corruption and abuse of power; threats of violence against human rights activists; violence against women; and forced labor.”;

Whereas the Department of State’s 2018 Human Rights report notes numerous human rights concerns in the Philippines, including “unlawful or arbitrary killings by security forces, vigilantes, and others allegedly connected to the government, and by insurgents; forced disappearance; torture; arbitrary detention; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; political prisoners; arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy; criminal libel; killings of and threats against journalists; official corruption and abuse of power; and the use of forced and child labor”;

Whereas, on February 23, 2017, an arrest warrant was issued for Philippine Senator Leila De Lima for allegations related to drug trafficking, and as of April 4, 2019, Senator De Lima had been detained for 770 days;

Whereas the charges brought against Senator De Lima followed a history of criticizing extrajudicial killings in the Philippines and the Rodrigo R. Duterte administration’s antidrug campaign, including—

(1) in 2009, in her capacity as Chair of the Commission on Human Rights, Senator De Lima investigated the alleged involvement of then-Mayor of Davao City Rodrigo R. Duterte in the extrajudicial killings executed by the so-called “Davao Death Squad”;

(2) on December 15, 2014, then-Secretary of Justice De Lima led a raid of the national penitentiary which resulted in the confiscation of drugs, firearms, and contraband items and the extraction of 19 drug lords and high-profile inmates involved in the facility’s drug network;

(3) on July 13, 2016, Senator De Lima, in her capacity as Chair of the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights, filed Senate Resolution No. 9 calling for an investigation into extrajudicial killings and summary executions of suspected drug offenders arising from President Duterte’s “War on Drugs”;

(4) on August 22, 2016, Senator De Lima conducted Senate hearings during which alleged former death squad members detailed extrajudicial killings executed as part of the antidrug campaign and one member testified that Duterte participated in extrajudicial killings as mayor of Davao City; and

(5) on August 2, 2016, and September 19, 2016, Senator De Lima delivered two privileged speeches on the Senate floor calling on President Duterte to end the killings;

Whereas President Duterte vowed to publicly destroy Senator De Lima;

Whereas the charges against Senator De Lima were supported by testimony from inmates whose illegal activities were disrupted by her 2014 raid;

Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Council’s Working Group on Arbitrary Detention adopted an Opinion on August 24, 2018, finding several categories of arbitrary detention and concluding, “Ms. De Lima’s political views and convictions are clearly at the centre of the present case and that the authorities have displayed an attitude towards her that can only be characterized as targeted and discriminatory. Indeed, she has been the target of partisan persecution and there is no explanation for this other than her exercise of the right to express such views and convictions as a human rights defender.”;

Whereas the Department of State’s 2017 Human Rights Report highlighted due process obstructions in the case of Senator De Lima, stating, “During the year prosecutors used a variety of legal tactics, including filing new and amending previous charges, to delay arraignment.”;

Whereas the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention recommended that the Government of the Philippines adopt certain measures, including—

(1) the immediate release of Senator De Lima;

(2) an independent investigation of the circumstances surrounding the arbitrary detention; and

(3) the provision of compensation and other reparations, including reinstatement to the positions from which she was ousted;

Whereas, on July 20, 2017, the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission of the United States Congress held a hearing on The Human Rights Consequences of the War on Drugs in the Philippines, during which Human Rights Watch testified about the “relentless government campaign” against Senator De Lima “in evident response to her outspoken criticism of Duterte’s ‘war on drugs’ and her calls for accountability”;

Whereas Amnesty International finds Senator De Lima’s detention to be based solely on her criticism of the Government of the Philippines, her political beliefs, and her peaceful defense of human rights, and considers her a Prisoner of Conscience;

Whereas the immediate release of Senator De Lima has been called for by nongovernmental organizations, human rights groups, parliamentary bodies, and individuals including the European Parliament, the Australian Parliament, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Liberal International, ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights, and many of Senator De Lima’s colleagues in the Senate minority bloc;

Whereas Maria Ressa, an investigative journalist who founded the online news platform Rappler, has been arrested several times on charges against her and her news organization widely viewed by human rights observers and a number of governments as part of a pattern of “weaponizing the rule of law” to repress independent media; and

Whereas Ms. Ressa has been released on bail, but she and Rappler still face charges and will soon be standing trial: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns—

(A) the Government of the Philippines for its role in state-sanctioned extrajudicial killings by police and other armed individuals as part of the “War on Drugs”;

(B) the arrest and detention of human rights defenders and political leaders who exercise their rights to freedom of expression;

(C) the harassment, arrest, and unjustified judicial proceedings against the media and journalists, in particular, the proceeding against Rappler and Maria Ressa; and

(D) the continued detention of Senator Leila De Lima;

(2) considers Senator De Lima to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely on account of her political views and the legitimate exercise of her freedom of expression;

(3) impose on the President of the United States to impose sanctions pursuant to the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (subtitle F of title XII of Public Law 114–328; 22 U.S.C. 2656 note) with respect to—

(A) members of the security forces and officials of the Government of the Philippines responsible for orchestrating the arrest and prolonged detention of Senator De Lima;

(B) officials of the Government of the Philippines responsible for orchestrating the arrest and prolonged detention of Senator De Lima;

(4) calls on the Government of the Philippines to immediately release Senator De Lima, drop all charges against her, remove restrictions on her personal and work conditions, and allow her to fully discharge her legislative mandate, especially as Chair of the Committee on Social Justice;

(5) calls on the President of the United States to ensure that United States security assistance provided to the Philippine National Police is fully consistent with the human rights conditions mandated in section 36 of the Arms Export Control Act ((22 U.S.C. 2776)) and section 620M of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, (22 U.S.C. 2378d);

(6) urges the Government of the Philippines to recognize the importance of human rights defenders and their work and allow them to operate freely without fear of reprisal; and

(5) urges the Government of the Philippines to guarantee the right to the freedom of the press, and to drop all the charges against Maria Ressa and Rappler.

Mrs. FISCHER. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment to the resolution be agreed to.

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

The committee-reported amendment was agreed to.

Mrs. FISCHER. I know of no further debate on the resolution, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on the adoption of the resolution, as amended.

The resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 142), as amended, and the preamble, as amended, were agreed to.

EXPRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES ALLIANCE WITH THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF KOREAN AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 366, S. Res. 152.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 152) expressing the importance of the United States alliance with the Republic of Korea and the contributions of Korean Americans in the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in italic and an amendment to strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

S. RES. 152

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea enjoy a comprehensive alliance partnership, founded in shared strategic interests and cemented by a commitment to democratic values;

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea work closely together to promote international peace and security, economic prosperity, human rights, and the rule of law;

Whereas the relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea goes as far back as Korea's Chosun Dynasty, when the United States and Korea established diplomatic relations under the 1882 Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation;

Whereas, on August 15, 1948, the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea, established on April 11, 1919, was dissolved and transitioned to the First Republic of Korea, the first independent government;

Whereas United States military personnel have maintained a continuous presence on the Korean Peninsula since the Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea (5 UST 2368) was signed at Washington on October 1, 1953;

Whereas, on May 7, 2013, the United States and the Republic of Korea signed a Joint Declaration in Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Alliance Between the Republic of Korea and the United States;

Whereas 63 years ago the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation between the United States and the Republic of Korea, with Protocol (8 UST 2217) was signed at Seoul on November 28, 1956;

Whereas the economic relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea is deep and mutually beneficial to both countries;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is the United States seventh-largest trading partner;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is one of the fastest growing sources of foreign direct investment in the United States;

Whereas the United States is the second largest source of foreign direct investment in the Republic of Korea;

Whereas, on January 13, 1903, 102 pioneer Korean immigrants arrived in the United States, initiating the first chapter of Korean immigration to America;

Whereas the over 2,000,000 Korean Americans living in the United States contribute to the di-

versity and prosperity of our Nation, participate in all facets of American life, and have made significant contributions to the economic vitality of the United States;

Whereas members of the Korean American community serve with distinction in the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas Korean Americans continue to build and strengthen the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea; and

Whereas the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (Public Law 115–409), signed into law on December 31, 2018, states that the United States Government—

(1) is committed to the Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea and all related and subsequent bilateral security agreements and arrangements concluded on or before the date of the enactment of that Act;

(2) recognizes the vital role of the alliance between the United States and South Korea in promoting peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region; and

(3) calls for the strengthening and broadening of diplomatic, economic, and security ties between the United States and the Republic of Korea: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,
That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the vital role the alliance of the United States and the Republic of Korea plays in promoting peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region;

(2) calls for the strengthening and broadening of diplomatic, economic, and security ties between the United States and the Republic of Korea; and

(3) reaffirms the United States alliance with the Republic of Korea is central to advancing United States interests and engagement in the region, based on shared commitments to democracy, free-market economics, human rights, and the rule of law.

Mrs. FISCHER. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment to the resolution be agreed to; that the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

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

The resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 152), as amended, and the preamble, as amended, were agreed to.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE IRAN HOSTAGE CRISIS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 368, S. Res. 395.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 395) recognizing the 40th anniversary of the Iran Hostage Crisis, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mrs. FISCHER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 395) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.
(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of October 31, 2019, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

PREVENTING ILLEGAL RADIO ABUSE THROUGH ENFORCEMENT ACT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 374, S. 1228.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.
The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1228) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for enhanced penalties for pirate radio, and for other purposes.

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

Mrs. FISCHER. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 1228) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 1228

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Preventing Illegal Radio Abuse Through Enforcement Act" or the "PIRATE Act".

SEC. 2. PIRATE RADIO ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENTS.

Title V of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 501 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 511. ENHANCED PENALTIES FOR PIRATE RADIO BROADCASTING; ENFORCEMENT SWEEPS; REPORTING.

"(a) INCREASED GENERAL PENALTY.—Any person who willfully and knowingly does or causes or suffers to be done any pirate radio broadcasting shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$2,000,000.

"(b) VIOLATION OF THIS ACT, RULES, OR REGULATIONS.—Any person who willfully and knowingly violates this Act or any rule, regulation, restriction, or condition made or imposed by the Commission under authority of this Act, or any rule, regulation, restriction, or condition made or imposed by any international radio or wire communications treaty or convention, or regulations annexed thereto, to which the United States is party, relating to pirate radio broadcasting shall, in addition to any other penalties provided by law, be subject to a fine of not more than

\$100,000 for each day during which such offense occurs, in accordance with the limit described in subsection (a).

"(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the PIRATE Act, and annually thereafter, the Commission shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report summarizing the implementation of this section and associated enforcement activities for the previous fiscal year, which may include the efforts by the Commission to enlist the cooperation of Federal, State, and local law enforcement personnel (including United States attorneys and the United States Marshals Service) for service of process, collection of fines or forfeitures, seizures of equipment, and enforcement of orders.

"(d) ENFORCEMENT SWEEPS.—

"(1) ANNUAL SWEEPS.—Not less than once each year, the Commission shall assign appropriate enforcement personnel to focus specific and sustained attention on the elimination of pirate radio broadcasting within the top 5 radio markets identified as prevalent for such broadcasts. Such effort shall include identifying, locating, and taking enforcement actions designed to terminate such operations.

"(2) ADDITIONAL MONITORING.—Within 6 months after conducting the enforcement sweeps required by paragraph (1), the Commission shall conduct monitoring sweeps to ascertain whether the pirate radio broadcasting identified by enforcement sweeps is continuing to broadcast and whether additional pirate radio broadcasting is occurring.

"(3) NO EFFECT ON REMAINING ENFORCEMENT.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the Commission shall not decrease or diminish the regular enforcement efforts targeted to pirate radio broadcast stations for other times of the year.

"(e) STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY.—The Commission may not preempt any State or local law prohibiting pirate radio broadcasting.

"(f) REVISION OF COMMISSION RULES REQUIRED.—The Commission shall revise its rules to require that, absent good cause, in any case alleging a violation of subsection (a) or (b), the Commission shall proceed directly to issue a notice of apparent liability without first issuing a notice of unlicensed operation.

"(g) PIRATE RADIO BROADCASTING DATABASE.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and semi-annually thereafter, the Commission shall publish a database in a clear and legible format of all licensed radio stations operating in the AM and FM bands. The database shall be easily accessible from the Commission home page through a direct link. The database shall include the following information:

"(A) Each licensed station, listed by the assigned frequency, channel number, or Commission call letters.

"(B) All entities that have received a notice of unlicensed operation, notice of apparent liability, or forfeiture order issued by the Commission.

"(2) CLEAR IDENTIFICATION.—The Commission shall clearly identify in the database—

"(A) each licensed station as a station licensed by the Commission; and

"(B) each entity described in paragraph (1)(B) as operating without a Commission license or authorization.

"(h) DEFINITION OF PIRATE RADIO BROADCASTING.—In this section, the term 'pirate radio broadcasting' means the transmission of communications on spectrum frequencies

between 535 and 1705 kilohertz, inclusive, or 87.7 and 108 megahertz, inclusive, without a license issued by the Commission, but does not include unlicensed operations in compliance with part 15 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations."

DEVELOPING INNOVATION AND GROWING THE INTERNET OF THINGS ACT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 375, S. 1611.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1611) to ensure appropriate prioritization, spectrum planning, and interagency coordination to support the Internet of Things.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with amendments, as follows:

(The parts of the bill intended to be stricken are shown in boldface brackets, and the parts of the bill intended to be inserted are shown in italics.)

S. 1611

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Developing Innovation and Growing the Internet of Things Act" or the "DIGIT Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Internet of Things refers to the growing number of connected and interconnected devices;

(2) estimates indicate that more than 125,000,000,000 devices will be connected to the internet by 2030;

(3) the Internet of Things has the potential to generate trillions of dollars in new economic activity around the world in the transportation, energy, agriculture, manufacturing, and health care sectors and in other sectors that are critical to the growth of the gross domestic product of the United States;

(4) businesses across the United States can develop new services and products, improve the efficiency of operations and logistics, cut costs, improve worker and public safety, and pass savings on to consumers by utilizing the Internet of Things and related innovations;

(5) the Internet of Things will—

(A) be vital in furthering innovation and the development of emerging technologies; and

(B) play a key role in developing artificial intelligence and advanced computing capabilities;

(6) the United States leads the world in the development of technologies that support the internet, the United States technology sector is well-positioned to lead in the development of technologies for the Internet of Things, and the appropriate prioritization of a national strategy with respect to the Internet of Things would strengthen that position;

(7) the Federal Government can implement this technology to better deliver services to the public; and

(8) the Senate unanimously passed Senate Resolution 110, 114th Congress, agreed to

March 24, 2015, calling for a national strategy for the development of the Internet of Things.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that policies governing the Internet of Things should—

(1) promote solutions with respect to the Internet of Things that are secure, scalable, interoperable, industry-driven, and standards-based; and

(2) maximize the development and deployment of the Internet of Things to benefit all stakeholders, including businesses, governments, and consumers.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission” means the Federal Communications Commission.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Commerce.

(3) STEERING COMMITTEE.—The term “steering committee” means the steering committee established under section 4(e)(1).

(4) WORKING GROUP.—The term “working group” means the working group convened under section 4(a).

SEC. 4. FEDERAL WORKING GROUP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall convene a working group of Federal stakeholders for the purpose of providing recommendations and a report to Congress relating to the aspects of the Internet of Things described in subsection (b).

(b) DUTIES.—The working group shall—

(1) identify any Federal regulations, statutes, grant practices, budgetary or jurisdictional challenges, and other sector-specific policies that are inhibiting, or could inhibit, the development or deployment of the Internet of Things;

(2) consider policies or programs that encourage and improve coordination among Federal agencies that have responsibilities that are relevant to the objectives of this Act;

(3) consider any findings or recommendations made by the steering committee and, where appropriate, act to implement those recommendations;

(4) examine—

(A) how Federal agencies can benefit from utilizing the Internet of Things;

(B) the use of Internet of Things technology by Federal agencies as of the date on which the working group performs the examination;

(C) the preparedness and ability of Federal agencies to adopt Internet of Things technology as of the date on which the working group performs the examination and in the future; and

(D) any additional security measures that Federal agencies may need to take to—

(i) safely and securely use the Internet of Things, including measures that ensure the security of critical infrastructure; and

(ii) enhance the resiliency of Federal systems against cyber threats to the Internet of Things; and

(5) in carrying out the examinations required under clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (4)(D), ensure to the maximum extent possible the coordination of the current and future activities of the Federal Government relating to security with respect to the Internet of Things.

(c) AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES.—In convening the working group under subsection (a), the Secretary shall have discretion to appoint representatives from Federal agencies and departments as appropriate and shall specifically consider seeking representation from—

(1) the Department of Commerce, including—

(A) the National Telecommunications and Information Administration;

(B) the National Institute of Standards and Technology; and

(C) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(2) the Department of Transportation;

(3) the Department of Homeland Security;

(4) the Office of Management and Budget;

(5) the National Science Foundation;

(6) the Commission;

(7) the Federal Trade Commission;

(8) the Office of Science and Technology Policy;

(9) the Department of Energy; and

(10) the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(d) NONGOVERNMENTAL STAKEHOLDERS.—The working group shall consult with nongovernmental stakeholders with expertise relating to the Internet of Things, including—

(1) the steering committee;

(2) information and communications technology manufacturers, suppliers, service providers, and vendors;

(3) subject matter experts representing industrial sectors other than the technology sector that can benefit from the Internet of Things, including the transportation, energy, agriculture, and health care sectors;

(4) small, medium, and large businesses;

(5) think tanks and academia;

(6) nonprofit organizations and consumer groups;

(7) security experts;

(8) rural stakeholders; and

(9) other stakeholders with relevant expertise, as determined by the Secretary.

(e) STEERING COMMITTEE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the Department of Commerce a steering committee to advise the working group.

(2) DUTIES.—The steering committee shall advise the working group with respect to—

(A) the identification of any Federal regulations, statutes, grant practices, programs, budgetary or jurisdictional challenges, and other sector-specific policies that are inhibiting, or could inhibit, the development of the Internet of Things;

(B) situations in which the use of the Internet of Things is likely to deliver significant and scalable economic and societal benefits to the United States, including benefits from or to—

(i) smart traffic and transit technologies;

(ii) augmented logistics and supply chains;

(iii) sustainable infrastructure;

(iv) precision agriculture;

(v) environmental monitoring;

(vi) public safety; and

(vii) health care;

(C) whether adequate spectrum is available to support the growing Internet of Things and what legal or regulatory barriers may exist to providing any spectrum needed in the future;

(D) policies, programs, or multi-stakeholder activities that—

(i) promote or are related to the privacy of individuals who use or are affected by the Internet of Things;

(ii) may enhance the security of the Internet of Things, including the security of critical infrastructure;

(iii) may protect users of the Internet of Things; and

(iv) may encourage coordination among Federal agencies with jurisdiction over the Internet of Things;

(E) the opportunities and challenges associated with the use of Internet of Things technology by small businesses; and

(F) any international proceeding, international negotiation, or other international matter affecting the Internet of Things to which the United States is or should be a party.

(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The Secretary shall appoint to the steering committee members representing a wide range of stakeholders outside of the Federal Government with expertise relating to the Internet of Things, including—

(A) information and communications technology manufacturers, suppliers, service providers, and vendors;

(B) subject matter experts representing industrial sectors other than the technology sector that can benefit from the Internet of Things, including the transportation, energy, agriculture, and health care sectors;

(C) small, medium, and large businesses;

(D) think tanks and academia;

(E) nonprofit organizations and consumer groups;

(F) security experts;

(G) rural stakeholders; and

(H) other stakeholders with relevant expertise, as determined by the Secretary.

(4) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the steering committee shall submit to the working group a report that includes any findings or recommendations of the steering committee.

(5) INDEPENDENT ADVICE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The steering committee shall set the agenda of the steering committee in carrying out the duties of the steering committee under paragraph (2).

(B) SUGGESTIONS.—The working group may suggest topics or items for the steering committee to study, and the steering committee shall take those suggestions into consideration in carrying out the duties of the steering committee.

(C) REPORT.—The steering committee shall ensure that the report submitted under paragraph (4) is the result of the independent judgment of the steering committee.

(6) NO COMPENSATION FOR MEMBERS.—A member of the steering committee shall serve without compensation.

[(6)](7) TERMINATION.—The steering committee shall terminate on the date on which the working group submits the report under subsection (f) [unless, on or before that date, the Secretary files a new charter for the steering committee under section 9(c) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.)].

(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the working group shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(A) the findings and recommendations of the working group with respect to the duties of the working group under subsection (b);

(B) the report submitted by the steering committee under subsection (e)(4), as the report was received by the working group;

(C) recommendations for action or reasons for inaction, as applicable, with respect to each recommendation made by the steering committee in the report submitted under subsection (e)(4); and

(D) an accounting of any progress made by Federal agencies to implement recommendations made by the working group or the steering committee.

(2) COPY OF REPORT.—The working group shall submit a copy of the report described in paragraph (1) to—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(C) any other committee of Congress, upon request to the working group.

SEC. 5. ASSESSING SPECTRUM NEEDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission, in consultation with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration,

shall issue a notice of inquiry seeking public comment on the current, as of the date of enactment of this Act, and future spectrum needs to enable better connectivity relating to the Internet of Things.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In issuing the notice of inquiry under subsection (a), the Commission shall seek comments that consider and evaluate—

(1) whether adequate spectrum is available, or is planned for allocation, for commercial wireless services that could support the growing Internet of Things;

(2) if adequate spectrum is not available for the purposes described in paragraph (1), how to ensure that adequate spectrum is available for increased demand with respect to the Internet of Things;

(3) what regulatory barriers may exist to providing any needed spectrum that would support uses relating to the Internet of Things; and

(4) what the role of unlicensed and licensed spectrum is and will be in the growth of the Internet of Things.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report summarizing the comments submitted in response to the notice of inquiry issued under subsection (a).

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendments be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendments were agreed to.

The bill (S. 1611), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 1611

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Developing Innovation and Growing the Internet of Things Act” or the “DIGIT Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Internet of Things refers to the growing number of connected and interconnected devices;

(2) estimates indicate that more than 125,000,000,000 devices will be connected to the internet by 2030;

(3) the Internet of Things has the potential to generate trillions of dollars in new economic activity around the world in the transportation, energy, agriculture, manufacturing, and health care sectors and in other sectors that are critical to the growth of the gross domestic product of the United States;

(4) businesses across the United States can develop new services and products, improve the efficiency of operations and logistics, cut costs, improve worker and public safety, and pass savings on to consumers by utilizing the Internet of Things and related innovations;

(5) the Internet of Things will—

(A) be vital in furthering innovation and the development of emerging technologies; and

(B) play a key role in developing artificial intelligence and advanced computing capabilities;

(6) the United States leads the world in the development of technologies that support the internet, the United States technology sector is well-positioned to lead in the development of technologies for the Internet of Things, and the appropriate prioritization of a national strategy with respect to the Internet of Things would strengthen that position;

(7) the Federal Government can implement this technology to better deliver services to the public; and

(8) the Senate unanimously passed Senate Resolution 110, 114th Congress, agreed to March 24, 2015, calling for a national strategy for the development of the Internet of Things.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that policies governing the Internet of Things should—

(1) promote solutions with respect to the Internet of Things that are secure, scalable, interoperable, industry-driven, and standards-based; and

(2) maximize the development and deployment of the Internet of Things to benefit all stakeholders, including businesses, governments, and consumers.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission” means the Federal Communications Commission.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Commerce.

(3) STEERING COMMITTEE.—The term “steering committee” means the steering committee established under section 4(e)(1).

(4) WORKING GROUP.—The term “working group” means the working group convened under section 4(a).

SEC. 4. FEDERAL WORKING GROUP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall convene a working group of Federal stakeholders for the purpose of providing recommendations and a report to Congress relating to the aspects of the Internet of Things described in subsection (b).

(b) DUTIES.—The working group shall—

(1) identify any Federal regulations, statutes, grant practices, budgetary or jurisdictional challenges, and other sector-specific policies that are inhibiting, or could inhibit, the development or deployment of the Internet of Things;

(2) consider policies or programs that encourage and improve coordination among Federal agencies that have responsibilities that are relevant to the objectives of this Act;

(3) consider any findings or recommendations made by the steering committee and, where appropriate, act to implement those recommendations;

(4) examine—

(A) how Federal agencies can benefit from utilizing the Internet of Things;

(B) the use of Internet of Things technology by Federal agencies as of the date on which the working group performs the examination;

(C) the preparedness and ability of Federal agencies to adopt Internet of Things technology as of the date on which the working group performs the examination and in the future; and

(D) any additional security measures that Federal agencies may need to take to—

(i) safely and securely use the Internet of Things, including measures that ensure the security of critical infrastructure; and

(ii) enhance the resiliency of Federal systems against cyber threats to the Internet of Things; and

(5) in carrying out the examinations required under clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (4)(D), ensure to the maximum extent pos-

sible the coordination of the current and future activities of the Federal Government relating to security with respect to the Internet of Things.

(c) AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES.—In convening the working group under subsection (a), the Secretary shall have discretion to appoint representatives from Federal agencies and departments as appropriate and shall specifically consider seeking representation from—

(1) the Department of Commerce, including—

(A) the National Telecommunications and Information Administration;

(B) the National Institute of Standards and Technology; and

(C) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(2) the Department of Transportation;

(3) the Department of Homeland Security;

(4) the Office of Management and Budget;

(5) the National Science Foundation;

(6) the Commission;

(7) the Federal Trade Commission;

(8) the Office of Science and Technology Policy;

(9) the Department of Energy; and

(10) the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(d) NONGOVERNMENTAL STAKEHOLDERS.—The working group shall consult with nongovernmental stakeholders with expertise relating to the Internet of Things, including—

(1) the steering committee;

(2) information and communications technology manufacturers, suppliers, service providers, and vendors;

(3) subject matter experts representing industrial sectors other than the technology sector that can benefit from the Internet of Things, including the transportation, energy, agriculture, and health care sectors;

(4) small, medium, and large businesses;

(5) think tanks and academia;

(6) nonprofit organizations and consumer groups;

(7) security experts;

(8) rural stakeholders; and

(9) other stakeholders with relevant expertise, as determined by the Secretary.

(e) STEERING COMMITTEE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the Department of Commerce a steering committee to advise the working group.

(2) DUTIES.—The steering committee shall advise the working group with respect to—

(A) the identification of any Federal regulations, statutes, grant practices, programs, budgetary or jurisdictional challenges, and other sector-specific policies that are inhibiting, or could inhibit, the development of the Internet of Things;

(B) situations in which the use of the Internet of Things is likely to deliver significant and scalable economic and societal benefits to the United States, including benefits from or to—

(i) smart traffic and transit technologies;

(ii) augmented logistics and supply chains;

(iii) sustainable infrastructure;

(iv) precision agriculture;

(v) environmental monitoring;

(vi) public safety; and

(vii) health care;

(C) whether adequate spectrum is available to support the growing Internet of Things and what legal or regulatory barriers may exist to providing any spectrum needed in the future;

(D) policies, programs, or multi-stakeholder activities that—

(i) promote or are related to the privacy of individuals who use or are affected by the Internet of Things;

(ii) may enhance the security of the Internet of Things, including the security of critical infrastructure;

(iii) may protect users of the Internet of Things; and

(iv) may encourage coordination among Federal agencies with jurisdiction over the Internet of Things;

(E) the opportunities and challenges associated with the use of Internet of Things technology by small businesses; and

(F) any international proceeding, international negotiation, or other international matter affecting the Internet of Things to which the United States is or should be a party.

(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The Secretary shall appoint to the steering committee members representing a wide range of stakeholders outside of the Federal Government with expertise relating to the Internet of Things, including—

(A) information and communications technology manufacturers, suppliers, service providers, and vendors;

(B) subject matter experts representing industrial sectors other than the technology sector that can benefit from the Internet of Things, including the transportation, energy, agriculture, and health care sectors;

(C) small, medium, and large businesses;

(D) think tanks and academia;

(E) nonprofit organizations and consumer groups;

(F) security experts;

(G) rural stakeholders; and

(H) other stakeholders with relevant expertise, as determined by the Secretary.

(4) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the steering committee shall submit to the working group a report that includes any findings or recommendations of the steering committee.

(5) INDEPENDENT ADVICE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The steering committee shall set the agenda of the steering committee in carrying out the duties of the steering committee under paragraph (2).

(B) SUGGESTIONS.—The working group may suggest topics or items for the steering committee to study, and the steering committee shall take those suggestions into consideration in carrying out the duties of the steering committee.

(C) REPORT.—The steering committee shall ensure that the report submitted under paragraph (4) is the result of the independent judgment of the steering committee.

(6) NO COMPENSATION FOR MEMBERS.—A member of the steering committee shall serve without compensation.

(7) TERMINATION.—The steering committee shall terminate on the date on which the working group submits the report under subsection (f).

(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the working group shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(A) the findings and recommendations of the working group with respect to the duties of the working group under subsection (b);

(B) the report submitted by the steering committee under subsection (e)(4), as the report was received by the working group;

(C) recommendations for action or reasons for inaction, as applicable, with respect to each recommendation made by the steering committee in the report submitted under subsection (e)(4); and

(D) an accounting of any progress made by Federal agencies to implement recommendations made by the working group or the steering committee.

(2) COPY OF REPORT.—The working group shall submit a copy of the report described in paragraph (1) to—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(C) any other committee of Congress, upon request to the working group.

SEC. 5. ASSESSING SPECTRUM NEEDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission, in consultation with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, shall issue a notice of inquiry seeking public comment on the current, as of the date of enactment of this Act, and future spectrum needs to enable better connectivity relating to the Internet of Things.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In issuing the notice of inquiry under subsection (a), the Commission shall seek comments that consider and evaluate—

(1) whether adequate spectrum is available, or is planned for allocation, for commercial wireless services that could support the growing Internet of Things;

(2) if adequate spectrum is not available for the purposes described in paragraph (1), how to ensure that adequate spectrum is available for increased demand with respect to the Internet of Things;

(3) what regulatory barriers may exist to providing any needed spectrum that would support uses relating to the Internet of Things; and

(4) what the role of unlicensed and licensed spectrum is and will be in the growth of the Internet of Things.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report summarizing the comments submitted in response to the notice of inquiry issued under subsection (a).

PREVENTING ILLEGAL RADIO ABUSE THROUGH ENFORCEMENT ACT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 583 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 583) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for enhanced penalties for pirate radio, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which was reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mrs. FISCHER. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 583) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RECESS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 3:45 p.m. for a briefing and that when the Senate reconvenes at 3:45 p.m., it resume executive session and consideration of the Solomonson nomination.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 2:32 p.m., recessed until 3:45 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. COTTON).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume executive session and consideration of the nomination of Matthew H. Solomonson, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

The Senator from New Mexico.

IRAN

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I begin by saying that my prayers are with our Armed Forces and their families. They stand watch despite the threat of danger, and they rely on their leaders to make wise decisions. I am grateful that there were no casualties during last night's missile attack.

For well over a year, I have been sounding the alarm that this President could bring us to war with Iran through mistake, misjudgment, or miscalculation. I have urged this body to assert our constitutional authority and pass our bipartisan bill to prevent a war with Iran.

In 2018 and 2019, I introduced the Prevention of Unconstitutional War with Iran Act. In June of last year, my amendment to prevent unauthorized war earned bipartisan majority support in the Senate, and it passed in the House of Representatives. It may not have become law, but the Constitution has not changed. Now, on the brink of war with Iran, it is long past time for Congress to step up to its constitutional responsibilities and stop the march to an unauthorized war.

Americans oppose another war in the Middle East. Despite the President's claim to the contrary, war with Iran would certainly not "go very quickly." That is what the President has said—"go very quickly." Any war with Iran would be prolonged, bloody, and costly. Yet, even if you support a war with Iran, we all swore an oath to uphold the Constitution, and Congress—and Congress alone—has the authority, under article I of the Constitution, to declare war.

Any country would consider the President's strike on one of Iran's highest ranking military commanders—someone whom many consider to be the second most powerful person in Iran's Government—to be an act of war. Now, predictably, Iran has

responded. So Congress must no longer hide from its constitutional responsibility.

If Congress does not stop the military conflict with Iran, this President will continue to take a wrecking ball through the Middle East, making one impulsive decision after another while having no long-term plan or strategic goal in sight. The President's speech made it clear he has no strategy to defuse the situation or to achieve a diplomatic result. He will continue the provocative warpath we are on.

While we may now be in a period of relative calm, the position we are in is untenable, and it is because the President abandoned diplomacy and created this crisis. The administration did not consult Congress before carrying out the strike, which is something that, typically, an administration would do before carrying out a strike like this; it would have a true consultation with the top leaders in the Congress. The administration did not consult our allies or try to form a coalition around what is clearly a highly provocative action that has ramifications for international security.

This is kind of a reminder of the run-up to Iraq. What did that look like, the run-up to the Iraq war? Sketchy evidence, bad intelligence, outright misrepresentations, and a call for vengeance against Saddam Hussein are what got us into the war in Iraq. This is where we are today in our conflict with Iran. The administration's vague assertions of an imminent threat, without its having concrete evidence, and its ever-changing story are too reminiscent of the origins of the war in Iraq. The echoes of Iraq are chilling.

Congress, step up. Do your constitutional duty. Rein in this reckless course we are on.

Let me say this, not just to those of us in this body who are speaking up but also to the thousands across the country who are marching against a rush to war: To speak out against a war with Iran is a patriotic activity, a patriotic duty. It is the right action to take, and it is the right thing to do. We are speaking up to stop this Nation from repeating the grave mistakes of the Iraq war. We are speaking up because we love this country, because we do not want to see another military family mourn a loved one who loses his life in a war that does not need to be fought and that we have the power to stop and to avoid.

President Trump set this disastrous course in motion in May of 2018 when he unilaterally withdrew from the Iran nuclear agreement. This was a deal the international community stood firmly behind. It reminded everyone—European countries, Russia, and China—that we were all a part of this deal. That agreement took the single greatest threat to the U.S. and international security—that being Iran—off the table. It prevented Iran from developing nuclear weapons. According to the International Atomic Energy Agen-

cy and President Trump's military and national security experts, Iran was complying with the agreement when the President withdrew.

The nuclear agreement did not solve all of the problems with Iran, but it is clear that the diplomatic effort reduced tensions with a longstanding adversary and reduced the threat of hostilities. Yet, instead of working to build on this progress, the President precipitously withdrew from the agreement and began his maximum pressure campaign to force Iran to capitulate to a long list of impossible demands. The President promised he would get us a "better deal." That is what he said—get us a "better deal." He has not. There is no better deal in sight.

I call on the President and his administration to use all of their diplomatic tools to deescalate this threatening situation—a situation that risks American lives. I call on them to work with our allies to find a path back to the nuclear limits the international community agreed to, to develop channels for productive communication and diplomacy, and to work toward stabilizing an unstable Middle East.

Leader MCCONNELL and the Republican leadership must bring this debate to the Senate floor. Senator KAINE's recently filed War Powers Resolution is one step in that direction. Senator PAUL and I have called upon all Senators to support our Prevention of Unconstitutional War with Iran Act. We must keep up this fight and block funds for any war with Iran in the absence of congressional authorization, and we must repeal the outdated authorizations of force that are being abused—the one from 2001 and the one from 2002.

I strongly support our oath to defend our Nation and the Constitution from any enemies, foreign and domestic, including against a President who would take us to war without his having constitutional authority. If we do not act now to preserve our constitutional structure and to assert our constitutional authority, we fail the men and women in uniform whose lives we put at risk; we fail our oath to defend and protect the Constitution; and we fail the American people, who sent us here to represent them on the most consequential decision our country can make.

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. PORTMAN. 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.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I would like to take a few moments today to talk about the current situation with regard to Iran.

First, the decision to take out Qasem Soleimani. Let's remember who he was.

He was leader of the Quds Force and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps—both of these groups, by the way, having been designated as terrorist organizations.

He was responsible for providing the Shia militias in Iraq with explosively formed penetrators. What does that mean? These were the extremely deadly improvised explosive devices—so-called roadside bombs—that were responsible for killing over 600 American soldiers and injuring many more, at least a couple thousand.

Some of those maimed or killed were from my home State of Ohio. My heart goes out to their families for their sacrifice.

I got a chance to see some of these brave Americans in visits to the Landstuhl military hospital in Germany and the Walter Reed Hospital here in Washington, DC. We must never forget their courage and the sacrifices they and their families have made.

Over the past 2 months alone, Soleimani helped direct more than 11 attacks against our forces in Iraq. In fact, he was found recently to be plotting more. When he was killed, he was plotting additional and imminent attacks with the commander of the Shia militia—the same commander who directed both the rocket strikes that killed the American contractor and wounded four American service personnel in Erbil and the demonstration and assault against the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

Thankfully, that commander was taken off the battlefield as well.

For reasons I have outlined, the killing of Qasem Soleimani was both legitimate and justified. His history of fomenting terror and murdering innocents goes back decades, and the world is a better place without him.

Some of my Democratic colleagues have been critical of the President's actions against Iran, to include the killing of Soleimani. Some argue that our actions have been unwarranted and belligerent. In fact, given the facts, I believe President Trump has shown restraint in the face of continued Iranian aggression over these past 18 months.

By authorizing the killing of the leader of terrorist organizations that were actively plotting more violence against our brave men and women, I believe President Trump reset the concept of deterrence and fulfilled his duties as President.

As GEN David Petraeus said after the Soleimani action, "This was a significant effort to re-establish deterrence." I would call that peace through strength.

Last evening's Iranian missile attacks against our forces and air bases at Erbil and Al-Asad was a continuation of the reckless and provocative approach. Thanks to the professionalism and capability of our Armed Forces, despite over a dozen Iranian missiles aimed their way, there were, fortunately, no American or allied troop or Iraqi casualties—amazing—

and there was only minimal damage to our bases. For that, of course, we are very thankful.

I listened to President Trump this morning, and I agree that the maximum pressure campaign against Iran must continue, and it should include additional sanctions.

There is a way forward for Iran to rejoin the international community rather than continue to be a pariah and the top sponsor of state terrorism in the world. President Trump has said on many occasions he is willing to negotiate with Iran if they cease their belligerent actions in the region and come to the table.

We do not desire war with Iran, but we cannot and will not stand idly by as they continue to attack Americans, continue to kill our forces in the Middle East.

I have been in meetings with top administration officials today and yesterday, and I look forward to continued discussions on their strategy moving forward.

I will continue to pray for the safety of our men and women in uniform who are forward deployed, who put their lives in danger for all of us and do so for the sake of peace and stability.

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.

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

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I first want to say how relieved I am by reports that no lives were lost in last night's missile strikes in Iraq and how grateful I am for all those serving in the region and around the world.

The fact remains, however, that this is a volatile and frightening moment for our country. In a matter of days, the President of the United States has, without any authorization or notice, taken steps that have sent tensions soaring with Iran, threatened the fight against ISIS, jeopardized relationships with key allies, risked the safety of U.S. servicemembers and civilians, and brought us perilously close to war.

I have heard from so many people in my home State of Washington, and I know my colleagues have as well, about just how scary and uncertain this feels and the many questions it raises.

While there is no question Qasem Soleimani was a sworn enemy of the United States, people want to know whether the President's initial order was truly necessary to our safety and why right now in this time of already heightened tensions in the Middle East.

They want to know elected officials here in the Nation's capital are prioritizing their safety and our country's safety. Most of all, they want to know what comes next and what can be done to prevent things from getting worse.

Like so many Americans, I have watched these events unfold with increasing concern. As the daughter of a World War II veteran and Purple Heart recipient, I make decisions about the safety and security of our Nation with deep concern for our brave servicemembers and their families, a personal understanding of the sacrifices they make for all of us and our Nation, and an unwavering commitment to ensuring they have the support they need while they serve and when they come home.

To that end, while I firmly believe we must do everything possible to keep America safe and go after terrorists wherever they are, I also believe that, except in the most dire of circumstances, we should do everything possible to exhaust all of our diplomatic avenues and coordinate with our allies and our partners before taking military action all on our own.

I believe we should not enter a conflict without a very strong understanding of what we are trying to accomplish and what it will cost and that while America has every right to defend itself, striking another country preemptively, without the strongest evidence of immediate danger, is a dramatic step with significant long-term implications that should not be done without a full debate and congressional support.

Madam President, based on what we know now, the administration's actions in Iraq failed on each of these counts. It has not made us safer, and our allies feel blindsided, especially because this strike puts them at risk too.

There is no clear goal or clear-eyed understanding of the risks we have assumed. There was absolutely zero debate in this Congress and—unless you happened to be on the golf course with the President—absolutely no notification that he planned to massively escalate tensions with a foreign power overnight.

While, unfortunately, this is exactly the type of scenario many of us feared would arise from this President, I can't say it is surprising. President Trump's repeated reckless actions in the region, beginning with his decision to pull out of the Iran nuclear deal, have jeopardized critical objectives, leaving us without any clear strategy for restoring peace or protecting our troops and allies. We cannot assume Iran is done retaliating, and we must assume ISIS or other terrorists will take full advantage of the increased instability in the region.

In the face of challenges as serious as these, none of us in Congress, regardless of party, should be willing to just stand by and accept that our Nation's foreign policy and safety could be up-

ended by an impulsive late-night tweet. I certainly won't. Instead, I will continue to demand that the President provide us his legal justification for his order, commit to coming before Congress in advance of any further escalating steps as this now plays out, and explain how he will manage the consequences of his decision, with the goal of protecting Americans, our allies, and our interests.

I will continue to advocate for strategies that lead us toward safety and security rather than fan the flames. In the coming weeks, I look forward to voting in support of my colleague from Virginia, Senator Kaine's War Powers Resolution, and I am very glad to be a cosponsor. This resolution would reassert congressional authority, block President Trump's ability to start a war with Iran, and allow us to hear whatever case he may have before taking a vote on whether this is really the path we want our Nation to go down.

I hope every one of our colleagues listens to the people across this country who do not want to find themselves in an avoidable war and who sent us here to act as an independent branch of government, not a rubberstamp for an increasingly volatile administration. I hope they join us and support this resolution.

Madam President, finally, I will say that I voted against the war in Iraq because I felt the administration was asking us to send our brave men and women into harm's way without clear plans or goals. Today, this President isn't even asking. The goals and plans are even less clear, and the path ahead of us is very uncertain.

Congress has the power to ensure a debate, press this administration for a strategy, and check their power if they do not present a compelling one. It is well past time we used it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, this holiday season, the ancient darkness of anti-Semitism cast a shadow over New York City during Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights. The New York Police Department recorded at least nine separate attacks against Jews—more than one attack for each day of Hanukkah. New attacks are reported seemingly on a daily basis.

In Crown Heights, the site of deadly anti-Semitic riots incited by Al Sharpton in 1991, a group of men beat up an Orthodox Jew and attacked another with a chair.

In Williamsburg, another group terrorized an elderly Jewish man on the street. "Jew, Hitler burned you," one of the criminals reportedly said. "I'll shoot you."

Just outside the city, in Rockland County, a man with a machete stormed a celebration in a rabbi's home and injured five worshippers, leaving two in critical condition. The family of one victim, Josef Neumann, says he may never wake up from his coma.

These heinous attacks are part of a growing storm of anti-Semitism that has made Jewish Americans fearful to worship and walk the streets in their own communities. They come in the wake of the deadly rampage at the kosher market in Jersey City that left four innocent people dead, including a police detective, and of course they come in the wake of the deadliest anti-Semitic attack in our Nation's history: the massacre of 11 Jews at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh by a White supremacist.

According to the FBI, our country suffered a 37-percent increase in anti-Semitic crimes between 2014 and 2018. According to the New York Police Department, the city suffered a 26-percent increase in anti-Semitic crimes in the past year alone. That increase is alarming enough. So is the fact that most hate crimes reported in New York are crimes against Jews. While some of the increase is due to better reporting, much of it is not.

Jewish Americans bear witness to this harsh reality. Anti-Semitism is an ancient hatred, and today it appears in new disguises. It festers on internet message boards and social media. It festers in so-called Washington think tanks like the Quincy Institute, an isolationist, blame-America-first money pit for so-called "scholars" who have written that American foreign policy could be fixed if only it were rid of the malign influence of Jewish money. It festers even on elite college campuses, which incubate the radical boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement—a movement to wage economic warfare against the Jewish State. These forms of anti-Semitism may be less bloody than street crime in New York, but they channel the same ancient hatred, the same conspiratorial and obsessive focus on the Jewish people.

Anti-Semitic attacks are a symptom of a larger breakdown of public order in our major cities caused by politicians who are letting dangerous criminals roam our streets.

While Jews were being attacked in New York City, a law went into effect eliminating pretrial detention and bail for most crimes, including serious crimes like stalking, arson, robbery, and even manslaughter and negligent homicide. This law was a gift to criminals just in time for the holidays. In some cases, it came with an actual gift. New York City's criminal justice system gives goodies like taxpayer-funded movie tickets to criminal suspects just for showing up to court—movie tickets for criminals. I wish I were joking, but the joke is on the law-abiding citizens of this Nation.

These soft-on-crime politicians are doing their best to make crime pay in New York. Releasing criminals is the logical next step for the criminal-leniency movement.

Thanks to the new bail law, an estimated 3,800 criminal suspects were released from New York jails before New Year's Day. Many of those suspects

were arrested for new offenses within hours—within hours—of their release.

Case in point: On the sixth day of Hanukkah, December 27, Tiffany Harris was arrested for attacking three Jewish women in Crown Heights. She shouted "F-you Jews" as she slapped them in a rage. Despite the violent nature of her crime, Harris was amazingly released without bail the very next day, December 28, the seventh day of Hanukkah. On the eighth day of Hanukkah, Harris was arrested yet again for assault. She was released for a second time the day after that and is in custody now only because she was arrested for now a third time for failing to comply with a court order.

I can only imagine how demoralizing it must be for New York's police officers to arrest a violent criminal, only to risk their safety arresting them the next day for harming somebody else and the next day and the next day. How terrifying it must be for the witnesses of those crimes to contemplate giving evidence while the criminals they witnessed stalk the streets the very next day. And how enraging it must be for New York's Jews to suffer constant anti-Semitic attacks and know that the perpetrators will slide through a revolving door from the lockup back into their communities to spread more of their virulent, anti-Semitic hatred.

Soft-on-crime politicians claim that cash bail and strong policing punish the poor, but is there a worse punishment for poor communities than flooding them with dangerous criminals, making them unlivable for many law-abiding Americans who call those neighborhoods home? Guess what. Those dangerous criminals aren't going back to live in fancy penthouses in the Upper East Side. They aren't living behind gated communities in Bethesda and Arlington. They are living in the very communities that most need policing. That is why the consequences of criminal leniency never fall on the rich elites who praise it the most. Instead, the consequences fall on the less fortunate and on the brave officers who are duty-bound to uphold the law, even as they receive less and less support from the political class.

The real solution to disorder in our cities is the same as it always has been: more and better policing. New York's finest and police officers all across the country have broken crime waves in the past using steely resolve and superior force. They can do it again, if only we give them the freedom and support they need.

Thankfully, most Americans know whose side we are on in the fight against crime. We stand with cops, not criminals. We stand for the Jewish people against the ancient hatred that stalks them even to this day.

America liberated Nazi death camps in World War II, and we have served as a haven for persecuted Jews for longer than that. We must not allow the bigotry so common in Europe and the Middle East to spread here to our free

shores. We must not allow our city streets to be plunged into the lawlessness of the not so distant past.

IRAN

Madam President, I want to commend our brave troopers and our intelligence officers and the President for the daring strike last week on Qasem Soleimani. Qasem Soleimani had the blood of thousands of Americans on his hands, and he was plotting to kill more Americans just like his terrorist proxies had killed in Iraq on December 27. He even was picked up, when he landed at Baghdad International Airport, by a terrorist culpable for the bombing of our Embassy in Kuwait in 1983.

You would think that everyone would celebrate the death of a terrorist monster, but, no, you would be wrong. You would be wrong. Our Democratic friends have been criticizing and complaining ever since Qasem Soleimani died Thursday night.

Two particularly surprising complaints I have heard are that the Democrats weren't notified in advance and that Qasem Soleimani's plot wasn't imminent. Let's think about those criticisms.

The Speaker of the House and the minority leader weren't notified in advance of a target of opportunity against a terrorist mastermind. I am sorry, but what did you expect? Is the President or Secretary of Defense or Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff supposed to call hours in advance when they don't even know if the target will show up where our intelligence expects?

Were they supposed to call when the missile was in the air? Give me a break. Give me a break.

I will share what the majority leader told us yesterday about the raid on Osama bin Laden. Do you think he got notified in advance? No. Did he expect to be notified in advance? No. He said the Secretary of Defense called him after the strike to give him a brief summary of what had happened, and the majority leader, in 2011, simply said: "Congratulations." He put out a public statement to the exact same effect. Where is that sense of patriotism and pride from the Speaker of the House and from the minority leader today with the elimination of Qasem Soleimani?

Second, this critique that, well, Qasem Soleimani wasn't plotting an imminent attack—I mean, we are talking about how many terrorists can dance on the head of a pin here. Qasem Soleimani had been killing Americans for 30 years. He was flying around the Middle East to meet with his terrorist proxies in Syria and Lebanon and Iraq to plan how to kill more Americans.

We just had a briefing downstairs with the Director of the CIA and the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in which they said: Yes, the plot was imminent. Intelligence is never ironclad, though. It can rarely say a strike is going to happen at this

time on this day at this target. That is apparently the standard the Democrats want to hold the President to—not weeks, not even days, not even a period of days against a hard target that presented an opportunity, as Qasem Soleimani did last Thursday night.

Let me say this: Imminence is ultimately a question of judgment that has to be made by the people we have elected to make those decisions for our country. It is not a question of intelligence. Our intelligence officers have great skills and capabilities. They can tell us the best intelligence they have that suggests the timing of such attacks. But it is ultimately the people's elected representatives who make those judgments.

I will just submit that if you are a soldier sitting in Iraq with Qasem Soleimani flying around trying to decide when to kill you, the question of imminence probably looks a lot different than if you are a comfortable Senator sitting behind guarded doors with armed security details protecting your every movement.

I will simply say yet again that Qasem Soleimani got exactly what he deserved. All those Americans he killed and their families also got what they deserved: justice. America and the world are a safer place because Qasem Soleimani is no longer a part of this world.

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.

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

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

Mr. KAIN. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

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

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 6 Ex.]

YEAS—89

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

NAYS—8

Booker	Klobuchar	Schumer
Gillibrand	Markey	Wyden
Harris	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—3

Alexander	Perdue	Warren
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The nomination was confirmed.

[Rollcall Vote No. 7 Ex.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—47

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

NOT VOTING—2

Alexander	Perdue
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The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Eleni Maria Roumel, 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 Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining votes in this series be 10 minutes in length.

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

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

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll for this 10-minute vote.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

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

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Michael George DeSombre, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Thailand?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

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

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 8 Ex.]

YEAS—91

Baldwin	Capito	Crapo
Barrasso	Cardin	Cruz
Bennet	Carper	Daines
Blackburn	Casey	Duckworth
Blumenthal	Cassidy	Durbin
Blunt	Collins	Enzi
Boozman	Coons	Ernst
Braun	Cornyn	Feinstein
Brown	Cortez Masto	Fischer
Burr	Cotton	Gardner
Cantwell	Cramer	Graham

Grassley	Menendez	Scott (SC)
Hassan	Merkley	Shaheen
Hawley	Moran	Shelby
Heinrich	Murkowski	Sinema
Hirono	Murphy	Smith
Hoehven	Murray	Stabenow
Hyde-Smith	Paul	Sullivan
Inhofe	Peters	Tester
Johnson	Portman	Thune
Jones	Reed	Tillis
Kaine	Risch	Toomey
Kennedy	Roberts	Udall
King	Romney	Van Hollen
Lankford	Rosen	Warner
Leahy	Rounds	Whitehouse
Lee	Rubio	Wicker
Loeffler	Sasse	Wyden
Manchin	Schatz	Young
McConnell	Schumer	
McSally	Scott (FL)	

NAYS—7

Booker	Klobuchar	Warren
Gillibrand	Markey	
Harris	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—2

Alexander	Perdue
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The nomination was confirmed.

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

The majority whip.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

REMEMBERING KAY HAGAN

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, Kay Hagan was a kind and passionate public servant. She fought from the heart for women, children, students, servicemembers, and working people in North Carolina and across the country.

In 2013, when interest rates on Federal student loans were about to double so that the government could increase profits off of the backs of our students, Kay said no. Together, with our colleague Senator JACK REED, we put forward commonsense legislation to keep interest rates low for students across the country. In this instance and so many others, Kay stood for fairness and served as a voice for those who needed it most.

Kay and I may not have agreed on every issue, but on those key issues that matter to working families—like equal pay, raising the minimum wage, and helping students getting crushed by debt—we were proud to fight side by side.

My thoughts are with her husband Chip, their children and family, and the people of North Carolina as they mourn Kay's loss and celebrate her memory.

REMEMBERING CORPORAL FRED B. MCGEE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I rise today to honor a heroic Ohio veteran whom we lost this month, CPL Fred B. McGee. Corporal McGee served in Korea, where he and his squad leader were both wounded in the bloody Battle of Hill 528.

With his leader down, and despite his own injuries, Corporal McGee took command—he wasn't next in line, but he stepped up, and he saved lives. He was hit again, and his squad was given the order to withdraw. Yet still, with shrapnel in the face and leg, he voluntarily remained behind to evacuate his fellow soldiers who were wounded and killed. His acts of bravery earned Corporal McGee a Silver Star and two Purple Hearts.

For too long, he did not receive the recognition he earned serving our country. Like so many veterans, Corporal McGee rarely spoke about his service and never drew attention to his own courage. While recalling the battle earlier this year he said, "No, I'm not brave. I just did what was a necessity."

And in the 1950s, the color of his skin surely also contributed to the lack of recognition for Corporal McGee's heroism. He was drafted in 1951 into a newly integrating Army and was one of the first African-American soldiers to serve in Korea. Jefferson County's sheriff talked about how someone made a comic book in 1953 illustrating 10 stories of soldiers' heroics, they depicted Corporal McGee as a White man.

We owe a hero like Corporal McGee a tribute that befits his service and sacrifice. At the end of last year, the Jefferson County Veterans Service Commission honored Corporal McGee as its Veteran of the Year. And I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring him on the Senate floor today.

We thank CPL Fred McGee for his heroism and his sacrifices for our country and we send our thoughts to Corporal McGee's family. May the tributes from the many lives he touched bring you comfort, and know that we will keep alive the story of his heroism.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM MOEN, JR.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a member of my staff in the great State of New Jersey. We are all fortunate to have offices full of staff members passionate about working for the betterment of our country. William Moen, Jr., or Bill Moen, as we affectionately call him, is a shining example of what patriotism looks like in government service.

The son of a disabled Vietnam veteran and the grandson of a WWII veteran, Bill Moen's commitment to public service is a family legacy.

Even prior to his Federal work in my Senate office in Camden, NJ, Bill has worked at all levels of government in New Jersey. He's interned at his local police department and the First Con-

gressional District of New Jersey. He worked in the New Jersey State Legislature, with the Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders and even as an elected Freeholder himself in Camden County.

On December 9, 2013, I welcomed Bill Moen to my staff in Camden, NJ. Bill was with me on one of my first official events as U.S. Senator. He helped organize a visit to Cape May County—the southernmost county in New Jersey—where I spoke with residents who were still struggling to recover from the devastation of Superstorm Sandy. The past 6 years are full of memorable events, stories, projects, and cases like this one. He has managed my South Jersey office with compassion and integrity.

Mr. President, I wish to recognize Bill Moen today because he is leaving my office to set up his own as assemblyman representing New Jersey's Fifth Legislative District in the New Jersey State Assembly. I am sad to see him go but grateful for his work and proud of the new role he begins in what will surely be a long and brilliant career in public service.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING EARNIE BLACKLEY

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of Izard County Sheriff Earnie Blackley. Sheriff Blackley passed away on January 4, 2020, after a brief battle with cancer.

He first joined the Izard County Sheriff's Department in 1993 after having previously worked as a police officer in Greenville, MS, and served as chief deputy for 18 years before being elected sheriff in 2018.

Sheriff Blackley was a dedicated law enforcement official; a devoted husband, father, and grandfather; and a man of faith. His obituary noted how he was known for hosting fish fries to benefit a variety of causes and organizations. The outpouring of love and support shown to the sheriff and his family since his diagnosis is a testament to how well he served his community and how much that service was recognized and appreciated by all it impacted.

After being diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer in May of last year, Sheriff Blackley asked for prayers as he faced this serious diagnosis head on while also continuing to serve. Over 1,000 people reportedly turned out to a fundraiser in his honor shortly thereafter.

Sheriff Blackley was clearly a leader who inspired love, confidence, and respect. I am tremendously grateful for his decades of service in law enforcement and for the way he lived his life.

I join with many in his community and across the State of Arkansas in mourning his passing and praying for his loved ones, including his wife Theresa, during this difficult time. On behalf of everyone in Arkansas, I pray

God will bless the Blackley family and the people of Izard County as they cope with this loss and celebrate the life of Sheriff Earnie Blackley.●

TRIBUTE TO DANA BENNETT

● Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I come forward today to recognize the career and service of Ms. Dana Bennett, who will soon retire as president of the Nevada Mining Association. Ms. Bennett is the first woman to lead the Nevada Mining Association, serving as the State industry's educational and advocacy leader, as well as its chief representative in national and international outreach. As we commemorate her retirement, her countless contributions to the great State of Nevada are worthy of recognition.

Ms. Bennett began her career of service to Nevada as a principal research analyst with the Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, LCB, where she worked with both parties and committee staff in the State senate and assembly for over 9 years. One of her more notable achievements during her time at the LCB was identifying an error in the 1929 bill that established the design of the Nevada State flag. Ms. Bennett's sleuthing resulted in a design change to the Nevada State flag, ensuring that it fully complied with the law and producing the flag that we still proudly fly today.

In 1998, Ms. Bennett left the LCB to start her own legislative and policy research services company. She went on to represent such clients as the Nevada Broadcasters Association, the Nevada State Medical Association, the Associated General Contractors of Las Vegas, and many more. Ms. Bennett successfully ran this company, Research by Design, from 1998 to 2004, before being offered the position of director of government affairs at R&R Partners—one of Nevada's premiere public relations and government affairs firms.

In 2006, Ms. Bennett left R&R to pursue a graduate degree at Arizona State University, ASU. During her time in graduate school, Ms. Bennett served as a policy analyst at the Morrison Institute for Public Policy; a research assistant at the ASU School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies; and a research historian at the Arizona State Archives.

In January 2011, Ms. Bennett returned to Nevada to once again serve, this time as senior researcher for Governor Sandoval, eventually becoming the Northern Nevada regional director for the Governor's Office of Economic Development. As regional director, Ms. Bennett was a catalyst in the overhaul and redevelopment of that State agency, where she created the new State plan for excellence in economic development and worked to improve collaboration between the State and its regional development authorities to better facilitate economic growth in Nevada.

In December 2014, Ms. Bennett was named president of the Nevada Mining

Association. Through this role, Ms. Bennett has worked tirelessly to advocate for the mining industry in Nevada and educate people about the importance of mining and its impact on both the State and global economies. From her time at LCB, to becoming the first woman President of the Nevada Mining Association, Ms. Bennett has been a trailblazer for women in Nevada, helping break the glass ceiling in industries often dominated by men.

Through all of Ms. Bennett's incredible work and public service, she has gained an intimate understanding of the policy and initiatives that aim to improve the lives of all Nevadans. It is my sincere hope that Ms. Bennett will continue to be an advocate for the people of Nevada and their interests. Today, I celebrate the many contributions of Ms. Dana Bennett. Nevadans are fortunate to have had her leadership, knowledge, and voice during her service to both the State and the country.●

TRIBUTE TO JIM BYRUM

● Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise today to honor someone who has dedicated his entire career to promoting Michigan agriculture and someone I am proud to call my friend.

I have always said that, in Michigan, we don't have an economy unless we make things and grow things. For more than 40 years, Jim Byrum has been helping Michigan do just that.

That is a big deal for our State. From West Michigan's fruitbelt, to the forests of Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula, to sugarbeet and dry bean fields in the Thumb, to biofuel production providing good jobs in rural communities, to dairy and food processing businesses in cities and towns of all sizes, agriculture is our State's second-largest industry, supporting one in four jobs.

During his nearly 25 years with the Michigan Agri-Business Association, Jim has been a powerful advocate for those one in four jobs and for his organization's more than 400 members. His vision, insight, hard work, and great sense of humor have played a strong role in the association's success.

It is no surprise that Jim knows exactly what his members need; he has his own lifetime of experience to rely on.

Jim is the fourth generation of Byrums to live on his family's farm in Onondaga. Before he joined the Michigan Agri-Business Association, he was State executive director of Michigan's Farm Service Agency and executive director of the Michigan Bean Commission.

Jim may be moving on, but the imprint he has left on the agribusiness industry will live on. I know that Jim is particularly proud of the work he has done to expand markets internationally and to build the Michigan Agri-Business Leader Program, which has been bringing together different sec-

tors of agriculture and training the next generation of leaders since 2008.

I have been especially grateful for the culture of cooperation and bipartisanship Jim has helped cultivate in our State during a very challenging time for the industry.

As Jim told Russ White of MSU Today back in September: "There's going to be more change in the next 20 years of this industry than there has been in the past 50. And that change is coming at light speed . . . it's going to benefit consumers . . . it's going to benefit producers . . . but folks better be ready to embrace it."

I know for a fact that Michigan's agricultural industry is better positioned to embrace change thanks to Jim's hard work and dedication. Speaking of change, I am so happy that Jim will have more time to spend with his wife Dianne, who is a leader in her own right, and his two children and grandchildren.

Jim, thank you for your friendship, your leadership, and your lifetime of work on behalf of Michigan agriculture. It has been my honor to be your partner in helping Michigan make things and grow things.

Thank you.●

TRIBUTE TO WICK SLOANE

● Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, it is my deep honor and privilege to celebrate the career and legacy of Massachusetts resident, Wick Sloane of Bunker Hill Community College, or BHCC, as he retires this year.

Wick Sloane came to BHCC in 2006 and retires this year from his "official" job of helping students transfer to 4-year colleges. Wick leaves behind an unwavering commitment to the students—from their success in the classroom to ensuring that all of their basic needs are met.

Wick has worked tirelessly over the years to address even the most basic needs of low-income students, like student hunger and homelessness. His work touched the BHCC community in Massachusetts but also college communities far beyond BHCC throughout Massachusetts and across the country.

Due in large part to Wick's steadfast advocacy and voice, I successfully led several of my Senate colleagues in requesting the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, to conduct a study on food insecurity at colleges and universities. The GAO agreed to complete the study, which it published in January 2019. The groundbreaking study confirmed that food insecurity is a widespread issue on American college campuses and made recommendations for Federal action to address hunger issues for students in higher education. This study led lawmakers at the local level and at the national level—myself included—to introduce legislation to address hunger on college campuses.

Wick saw a problem impacting his community in Massachusetts and took action, resulting in immediate support

for our most vulnerable students in the BHCC community and Federal action that will begin to create change for millions of vulnerable students across this country.

Wick was one of the first BHCC professors to teach late-night classes through the college's nationally recognized Midnight Classes Program. In 2017, Wick's contributions were recognized by Governor Baker, who awarded him the Manuel Carballo Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service.

As Wick retires, we thank him for his years of service at Bunker Hill Community College and to students across the Commonwealth. I know Wick will keep fighting on behalf of our students in Massachusetts and beyond as he begins this next chapter.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to H. Res. 777, resolving that the Clerk of the House inform the Senate that a quorum of the House is present and that the House is ready to proceed with business.

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-3651. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Sustainment), transmitting, pursuant to law, quarterly exception Selected Acquisition Reports (SARs) as of September 30, 2019; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3652. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Commissary Credit and Debit Card User Fee" (RIN0790-AK92) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2020; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3653. A communication from the Deputy Chief Financial Officer and Director for Financial Management, Office of the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Civil Monetary Penalty Adjustments for Inflation" (RIN0605-AA54) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3654. A communication from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Protecting Against National Security Threats to the Communications Supply Chain Through FCC Programs; Huawei Designations; ZTE Designations" (FCC 19-121) (WC Docket No. 18-89) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3655. A communication from the Program Analyst, National Highway Traffic

Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Odometer Disclosure Requirements" (RIN2127-AL39) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3656. A communication from the Senior Attorney, Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Training, Qualification, and Oversight for Safety-Related Railroad Employees" (RIN2130-AC86) 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-3657. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0960) 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-3658. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0252) 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-3659. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0487) 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-3660. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Limited (Type Certificate Previously Held by Bombardier, Inc.) Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0675) 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-3661. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Embraer S.A. Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0519) 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-3662. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Engine Alliance Turbofan Engines" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0912) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 30, 2019; to the Com-

mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3663. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; 328 Support Services GmbH (Type Certificate previously Held by AvCraft Aerospace GmbH Fairchild Dornier GmbH; Dornier Luftfahrt GmbH) Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0674)) 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-3664. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0481)) 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-3665. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 3883" ((RIN2120-AA65) (Docket No. 31287)) 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-3666. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0406) 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-3667. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0698) 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-3668. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0704)) 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-3669. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0604) 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-3670. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0326)) 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-3671. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0980)) 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-3672. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Establishment of Class E Airspace; St. Simmons, GA and Brunswick, GA; Revocation of Class E Airspace; Brunswick, GA; and, Amendment of Class E Airspace Brunswick, GA” ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0591)) 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-3673. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Revocation and Amendment of the Class E Airspace; Lafayette, LA” ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0613)) 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-3674. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendment of Class E Airspace; Pittsfield, MA” ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0563)) 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-3675. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendment of Class E Airspace; Grove City, PA” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0590)) 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-3676. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Leonardo S.p.A. Helicopters” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0813)) 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-3677. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Air-

planes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0992)) 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-3678. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments; Amendment No. 3884” ((RIN2120-AA65) (Docket No. 31288)) 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-3679. A communication from the Attorney, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Tensaw River, Hurricane, AL” ((RIN1625-AA09) (Docket No. USCG-2018-0956)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3680. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Security Zone; San Diego Bay, San Diego, CA” ((RIN1625-AA87) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0953)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3681. A communication from the Attorney, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Niantic Bridge, Niantic, CT” ((RIN1625-AA09) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0545)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3682. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Isabel Holmes Bridge, Wilmington NC” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0904)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3683. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Ohio River, Brookport, IL” ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0486)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3684. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Special Local Regulation; Temporary Change for Recurring Marine Event in the Seventh Coast Guard District” ((RIN1625-AA08) (Docket No. USCG-2019-0908)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3685. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Office of Protected Resources, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Sea Turtle Con-

servation; Shrimp Trawling Requirements” ((RIN0648-BG45) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3686. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Pacific Whiting; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan; Amendment 2104; Catch Share Program, 5-Year Review, Follow-on Actions” ((RIN0648-BI35) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3687. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Annual Specifications and Management Measures for the 2019 Tribal and Non-Tribal Fisheries for Pacific Whiting, and Requirement To Consider Chinook Salmon Bycatch Before Reapportioning Tribal Whiting; Correction” ((RIN0648-BI67) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3688. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Seabird Bycatch Avoidance Measures” ((RIN0648-BI99) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3689. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Limited Reopening of the 2019 U.S. Pelagic Longline Fishery for Bigeye Tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean” ((RIN0648-XP005) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3690. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Bluefish Fishery; Quota Transfer From NC to RI” ((RIN0648-XX028) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3691. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer From NC to VA” ((RIN0648-XX030) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3692. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Magnuson-Stevens

Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Essential Fish Habitat" (RIN0648-BJ45) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3693. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Biennial Specifications" (RIN0648-BJ22) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3694. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Taking and Importing Marine Mammals Incidental to Construction and Operation of the Liberty Drilling and Production Island, Beaufort Sea, Alaska" (RIN0648-BI00) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3695. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-XY056) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3696. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Halibut Deck Sorting Monitoring Requirements for Trawl Catcher/Processors Operating in Non-Pollock Groundfish Fisheries Off Alaska; Correction" (RIN0648-BI53) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 2, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3697. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services, to Australia of 120mm.50 caliber in-bore sub-caliber training devices in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 19-091); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3698. A communication from the Division Director for Policy, Legislation, and Regulation, Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing Flexibility" (RIN1205-AB87) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 6, 2020; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3699. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Justice's Indian Country Investigations and Prosecution Report for calendar year 2018; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

Report to accompany S. 2302, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways and highway safety construction programs, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-200).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 3153. A bill to prohibit the sharing of United States intelligence with countries that permit the operation of Huawei fifth generation telecommunications technology within their borders; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 3154. A bill to improve the effectiveness of tribal child support enforcement agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 3155. A bill to establish a rural postsecondary and economic development grant program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 3156. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish the January 8th National Memorial in Tucson, Arizona, as an affiliated area of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 3157. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reinstate the financing for the Hazardous Substance Superfund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 3158. A bill to remove college cost as a barrier to every student having access to a well-prepared and diverse educator workforce, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. WARREN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 3159. A bill to prohibit the use of funds for military force against Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 3160. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act to modify the payment periods of loans from State revolving funds under those Acts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. KAINE, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 3161. A bill to establish the "Biomedical Innovation Fund", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN:

S. 3162. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish an Office of Drug Manufacturing; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. SANDERS, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 3163. A bill to authorize the collection of supplemental payments to increase congressional investments in medical research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 3164. A bill to rescind each Medal of Honor awarded for acts at Wounded Knee Creek on December 29, 1890, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 3165. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study to assess the unintended impacts on the health and safety of people engaged in transactional sex, in connection with the enactment of the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-164) and the loss of interactive computer services that host information related to sexual exchange, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 3166. A bill to lower the cost of drugs for all Americans; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

S. 3167. A bill to prohibit discrimination based on an individual's texture or style of hair; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. HEINRICH, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 3168. A bill to establish competitive Federal grants that will empower community colleges and minority-serving institutions to become incubators for infant and toddler child care talent, training, and access on their campuses and in their communities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 3169. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a Health in All Policies Demonstration Project, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. SANDERS):

S.J. Res. 64. A joint resolution relating to the use of military force against the Islamic Republic of Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. Res. 465. A resolution condemning threats by President Donald J. Trump to violate the law of armed conflict with respect to Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 160

At the request of Mr. SHELBY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 160, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect pain-capable unborn children, and for other purposes.

S. 182

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 182, a bill to prohibit discrimination against the unborn on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 296

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 296, a bill to amend XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 467

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 467, a bill to amend section 520E of the Public Health Service Act to require States and their designees receiving grants for development and implementation of statewide suicide early intervention and prevention strategies to collaborate with each Federally recognized Indian tribe, tribal organization, urban Indian organization, and Native Hawaiian health care system in the State.

S. 505

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) 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. 605

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) were added as cosponsors of S. 605, a bill to assist States in carrying out projects to expand the child care workforce and child care facilities in the States, and for other purposes.

S. 634

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 634, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish tax credits to encourage individual and corporate taxpayers to contribute to scholarships for students through eligible scholarship-granting organizations and eligible workforce training organizations, and for other purposes.

S. 778

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 778, a bill to direct the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to conduct coastal community vulnerability assessments related to ocean acidification, and for other purposes.

S. 877

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 877, a bill to prohibit the sale of shark fins, and for other purposes.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to improve data collection and monitoring of the Great Lakes, oceans, bays, estuaries, and coasts, and for other purposes.

S. 948

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 948, a bill to provide incentives to physicians to practice in rural and medically underserved communities, and for other purposes.

S. 1039

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1039, a bill to limit the use of funds for kinetic military operations in or against Iran.

S. 1381

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1381, a bill to modify the presumption of service connection for veterans who were exposed to herbicide agents while serving in the Armed Forces in Thailand during the Vietnam era, and for other purposes.

S. 1554

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1554, a bill to provide for an automatic acquisition of United States citizenship for certain internationally adopted individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 1605

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1605, a bill to make available necessary disaster assistance for families affected by major disasters, and for other purposes.

S. 2001

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2001, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to

Willie O'Ree, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions and commitment to hockey, inclusion, and recreational opportunity.

S. 2216

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2216, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to formally recognize caregivers of veterans, notify veterans and caregivers of clinical determinations relating to eligibility for caregiver programs, and temporarily extend benefits for veterans who are determined ineligible for the family caregiver program, and for other purposes.

S. 2236

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2236, a bill to require Federal agencies to address environmental justice, to require consideration of cumulative impacts in certain permitting decisions, and for other purposes.

S. 2598

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2598, a bill to require the payment of user fees by qualified professional asset managers seeking an individual exemption from certain requirements.

S. 2671

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2671, a bill to build safer, thriving communities, and save lives by investing in effective violence reduction initiatives.

S. 2803

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2803, a bill to provide Federal housing assistance on behalf of youths who are aging out of foster care, and for other purposes.

S. 3056

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3056, a bill to designate as wilderness certain Federal portions of the red rock canyons of the Colorado Plateau and the Great Basin Deserts in the State of Utah for the benefit of present and future generations of people in the United States.

S. 3102

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 3102, a bill to require the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the Department of Commerce to

provide estimates relating to the distribution of aggregate economic growth across specific percentile groups of income.

S. 3148

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3148, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to list fentanyl-related substances as schedule I controlled substances.

S. 3152

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3152, a bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to incorporate data on maternal health outcomes into its broadband health maps.

S.J. RES. 13

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 13, a joint resolution to repeal the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 63

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) 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.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 3154. A bill to improve the effectiveness of tribal child support enforcement agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 3154

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Tribal Child Support Enforcement Act".

SEC. 2. IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRIBAL CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.

(a) IMPROVING THE COLLECTION OF PAST-DUE CHILD SUPPORT THROUGH STATE AND TRIBAL PARITY IN THE ALLOWABLE USE OF TAX INFORMATION.—

(1) AMENDMENT TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.—Section 464 of the Social Security Act

(42 U.S.C. 664) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(d) APPLICABILITY TO INDIAN TRIBES AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVING A GRANT UNDER THIS PART.—This section, except for the requirement to distribute amounts in accordance with section 457, shall apply to an Indian tribe or tribal organization receiving a grant under section 455(f) in the same manner in which this section applies to a State with a plan approved under this part."

(2) AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.—

(A) Section 6103(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking "any local child support enforcement agency" and inserting "any tribal or local child support enforcement agency".

(B) Section 6103(a)(3) of such Code is amended by inserting ", (8)" after "(6)".

(C) Section 6103(l) of such Code is amended—

(i) in paragraph (6)—

(I) by striking "or local" in subparagraph (A) and inserting "tribal, or local";

(II) by striking "AND LOCAL" in the heading thereof and inserting "TRIBAL, AND LOCAL";

(III) by striking "The following" in subparagraph (B) and inserting "The";

(IV) by striking the colon and all that follows in subparagraph (B) and inserting a period; and

(V) by adding at the end the following:

"(D) STATE, TRIBAL, OR LOCAL CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.—For purposes of this paragraph, the following shall be treated as a State, tribal, or local child support enforcement agency:

"(i) Any agency of a State or political subdivision thereof operating pursuant to a plan described in section 454 of the Social Security Act which has been approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under part D of title IV of such Act.

"(ii) Any child support enforcement agency of an Indian tribe or tribal organization receiving a grant under section 455(f) of the Social Security Act."

(ii) in paragraph (8)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), by striking "or State or local" and inserting "State, tribal, or local";

(II) by adding the following at the end of subparagraph (B): "The information disclosed to any child support enforcement agency under subparagraph (A) with respect to any individual with respect to whom child support obligations are sought to be established or enforced may be disclosed by such agency to any agent of such agency which is under contract with such agency for purposes of, and to the extent necessary in, establishing and collecting child support obligations from, and locating, individuals owing such obligations.";

(III) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

"(C) STATE, TRIBAL, OR LOCAL CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'State, tribal, or local child support enforcement agency' has the same meaning as when used in paragraph (6)(D)."; and

(IV) by striking "AND LOCAL" in the heading thereof and inserting "TRIBAL, AND LOCAL"; and

(iii) in paragraph (10)(B), by adding at the end the following new clause:

"(iii) The information disclosed to any child support enforcement agency under subparagraph (A) with respect to any individual with respect to whom child support obligations are sought to be established or enforced may be disclosed by such agency to any agent of such agency which is under contract with such agency for purposes of, and to the extent necessary in, establishing and collecting child support obligations from,

and locating, individuals owing such obligations."

(D) Subsection (c) of section 6402 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following: "For purposes of this subsection, any reference to a State shall include a reference to any Indian tribe or tribal organization receiving a grant under section 455(f) of the Social Security Act."

(b) REIMBURSEMENT FOR REPORTS.—Section 453(g) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 653(g)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking "STATE"; and

(2) by striking "and State" and inserting "State, and tribal".

(c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—Paragraphs (7) and (33) of sections 454 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 654) are each amended by striking "450b" and inserting "5304".

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 3155. A bill to establish a rural postsecondary and economic development grant program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Success for Rural Students and Communities Act, a bill that would help rural students achieve their higher education goals and connect their successes with economic opportunities in their own communities. I want to thank Senator HASSAN for introducing this bill with me.

The Success for Rural Students and Communities Act aims to improve the outcomes for rural students who are pursuing higher education and skills-based credentials that will prepare them to meet the workforce needs of their home communities.

According to the 2010 census, Maine is now the most rural State in the Nation. Two out of three Maine schools are in rural communities, and more than half of Maine's students attend those schools. While nearly 90 percent of the students in my State graduate from high school, only 62 percent enroll in higher education, at least right away. According to a recent report by the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, only 30 percent of Maine students go on to earn a 2-year or a 4-year degree. So we have a huge dichotomy between the number of Maine students who graduate from high school and the number who are successful in graduating from some sort of higher education.

Maine's experience reflects the trends observed nationwide. Rural students tend to graduate from high school at higher rates than their peers in urban districts and at about the same rate as their peers in suburban schools, but only 59 percent of rural graduates enroll in college upon graduation, which is a lower percentage than their counterparts in urban and suburban areas.

The Success for Rural Students and Communities Act would help spur innovation, investment, and strategies that would improve college access and success for rural students. It would create

a demonstration program to encourage rural community stakeholders to partner together to help students go on to college or obtain some other postsecondary education, complete this education, and enter the workforce. These partnerships would draw on the talents of local school districts, institutions of higher education, regional economic development entities, rural community organizations, and the private sector. The bill encourages these partnerships to develop and implement strategies to help students and their families navigate higher education opportunities and addresses the barriers to their achievement.

For example, the bill calls for partnerships to coalesce around approaches that boost higher education enrollment rates for referral students by exposing students and their families to college campuses, courses, internships, and career pathways to jobs at home. These partnerships could also focus on rural incompletion rates of nontraditional students who may need additional credentials or who once began but did not finish higher education.

To meet the demands of today's workforce, many employees will need a credential beyond a high school diploma—perhaps a college degree, a skilled trade credential, or a professional certificate. The Success for Rural Students and Communities Act encourages schools and employers to forge partnerships that will put students on pathways into the high-demand jobs available where they live. That helps the rural communities. It helps them keep their young people. It helps them keep people who have the education and the skills those communities need to be vibrant and successful and to have strong economies.

The bill highlights a number of strategies that could be developed and tested, including work-based learning opportunities, such as apprenticeships, internships, and stackable credentials that make up a sequence of courses on the path to a certain skill or job. I have toured apprenticeship programs in Maine, including one that helps to train people for jobs in forestry, and I have seen firsthand how successful those apprenticeship programs are.

When rural students enroll in college, they often face barriers that prevent them from graduating, and that is why I have been a big promoter of student success programs. I have seen a very effective one at the Eastern Maine Community College in Bangor, where students are helped with whatever the barrier is that is preventing them from completing community college. In some cases, it is the need for some mentoring; in others, tutoring in some areas. In other cases, it is simply a short-term loan in order for them to fix their automobile so they can get to class. In another case, it is childcare needs. Whatever the barrier is, if we can help these students, they will be able to complete their education.

Many are the first in their families to attend college, which means they

may have a more difficult time finding information about financial aid or selecting an education program that meets their needs. With the right supports in place, more and more rural students can complete their postsecondary education.

Let me give a great example of the type of program I am talking about that would fulfill the goals of this legislation. In Maine's Aroostook County, where I was born and raised and where much of my family still lives, the Aroostook Aspirations Initiative is using this kind of model to help put students on pathways to academic and career success. Launched with a generous donation from local philanthropic partners, Aroostook Aspirations provides scholarships to high school students in Aroostook County who are seeking postsecondary education. The initiative collaborates with local colleges and universities, including the University of Maine at Presque Isle, the University of Maine at Fort Kent, Northern Maine Community College, and Husson University. It works with the area businesses and entrepreneurs to offer seminars that guide students throughout their college educations—the kind of mentoring I was referring to.

Students can also team up with Aroostook County employers through internships that give them experience in jobs they wish to pursue or simply try out to see if the jobs fit them. They create relationships with professional mentors, who help put them on the right path to entering the workforce.

The Success for Rural Students and Communities Act would support dynamic programs such as the Aroostook Aspirations Initiative and encourage other communities in rural America to innovate in similar ways. The Success for Rural Students and Communities Act would make a meaningful investment in the educational aspirations of rural students and their families and would strengthen the economy in rural America. By helping students succeed in reaching their education and career goals, we can also enhance the skills of our workforce in rural America. I urge my colleagues to support the Collins-Hassan bill.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 465—CONDEMNING THREATS BY PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP TO VIOLATE THE LAW OF ARMED CONFLICT WITH RESPECT TO IRAN

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. HARRIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 465

Whereas President Donald J. Trump threatened to destroy sites “important

to . . . the Iranian culture” and threatened future retaliation in “a disproportionate manner” on January 4 and January 5, 2020, respectively;

Whereas Article 53 of Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions prohibits any act of hostility against cultural objects, including making such objects the target of reprisals;

Whereas destruction of cultural sites violates the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which the United States ratified during the administration of President George W. Bush;

Whereas the Department of Defense Law of War Manual states that “[c]ultural property, the areas immediately surrounding it, and appliances in use for its protection should be safeguarded and respected”;

Whereas the United States Government has condemned the Taliban, the Islamic State, al Qaeda and its affiliates, and the Government of the People's Republic of China, among others, for the destruction of cultural heritage;

Whereas the Trump Administration supported the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347 (2017) condemning “the unlawful destruction of cultural heritage, including the destruction of religious sites and artefacts”;

Whereas, on March 24, 2017, the United States Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations stated, “The United States seeks to hold accountable. . . the perpetrators of deliberate cultural heritage destruction.”;

Whereas the destruction of cultural sites in Iran could include damage to one or more of the 22 cultural sites in Iran inscribed on the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization;

Whereas, on January 6, 2020, Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper expressed that the United States would not target Iranian cultural sites, as the United States “follow[s] the laws of armed conflict”;

Whereas military actions conducted “in a disproportionate manner” violate international law, including Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, as well as the United States Department of Defense guidelines whether in reference to the conduct of armed conflict or the resort to war;

Whereas the Department of Defense Law of War Manual states that the principle of proportionality in the conduct of war “generally refers to the obligation to take feasible precautions in planning and conducting attacks and to refrain from attacks in which the expected loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, and damage to civilian objects incidental to the attack would be excessive.”;

Whereas the Department of Defense Law of War Manual states, “Proportionality is also a requirement for reprisals, which must respond in a proportionate manner to the preceding illegal act by the party against which they are taken”;

Whereas military action that disregards proportionality would further exacerbate the suffering of the Iranian people, who have endured—

(1) their own government's systematic and longstanding human rights violations, restrictions on political freedoms, and brutal suppression of their democratic aspirations; and

(2) the arbitrary reimposition of United States sanctions that have negatively affected livelihoods of ordinary Iranians and restricted economic activity; and

Whereas the destruction of cultural sites and the disproportionate use of military force are among the actions that could needlessly escalate the crisis with Iran: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) affirms that efforts to defend United States security and interests must take into account potential harm to civilians and other protected persons and objects in foreign countries, consistent with international legal principles and our common humanity;

(2) affirms that the destruction of cultural heritage is morally wrong, is a violation of international law, and that even threats of such destruction undermine years of public diplomacy demonstrating that the American people do not seek conflict with any cultural or religious group;

(3) affirms that no violation of the law of armed conflict or human rights violation by Iran or its proxies permits or justifies similar violations by any other state;

(4) urges President Donald J. Trump to use his bully pulpit to promote de-escalation of tensions with Iran rather than to threaten acts of war and violations of international law;

(5) strongly condemns the President's threats to destroy sites important to Iranian culture and to retaliate against Iran in a disproportionate manner; and

(6) demands that the President avoid needless escalation with Iran and refrain from violating the law of armed conflict.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CORNYN. 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:

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on

Wednesday, January 8, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 10, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: 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.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to grant floor privileges to a new Department of Defense fellow in my office, Keith Griefer, for the remainder of the Congress.

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

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Amy Hafez, Andrew Bremer, and Emily Beagle, fellows in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 116th Congress.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2020

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, January 9; 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 Ray nomination.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:26 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, January 9, 2020, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate January 8, 2020:

THE JUDICIARY

MATTHEW H. SOLOMONSON, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS.

ELENI MARIA ROUMEL, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MICHAEL GEORGE DESOMBRE, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND.