



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2020

No. 46

## Senate

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

### PRAYER

The Senator from South Carolina, the Honorable TIM SCOTT, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, teach us reverential awe. Give us the respect for You and Your purposes that You are due. Bless our leaders. Keep them from evil as You lead them to make a positive impact on our Nation and world.

Lord, rescue them from the inevitable troubles of life, protecting them from harm. As they seek to serve You, fill them with a faith that will not shrink, though oppressed by many foes. May they continually rejoice because of Your promise that no weapon formed against them shall prosper.

We pray in Your holy 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 (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 1 minute in morning business.

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

### IOWA HISTORY MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, as all Iowans know, I love history. That brings me to the floor to honor March as Iowa History Month.

Here are some facts about Iowa. Since becoming a State in 1846, Iowa has raised one President—that is Presi-

dent Hoover—and four Nobel laureates, and is home to over 2,000 locations on the National Register of Historic Places.

Our heritage is preserved by Iowans who do their good work through maintaining Iowa's museums and historic sites. I encourage all of my fellow Iowans to help pass on our history to the next generation by taking advantage of the many programs hosted this month by visiting [www.iowaculture.gov](http://www.iowaculture.gov).

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday evening, the President, the Vice President, and their task force offered an extensive public briefing on ongoing efforts to combat this new virus, which has spread from China throughout the world.

As the Director of the CDC explained, officials are now tracking more than 500 cases across our country. Nationwide, the risk to any individual American remains low, but as the Vice President and the experts reminded us, the time is now for all Americans to engage in basic commonsense measures and for Americans at heightened risk to take additional precautions. Detailed recommendations for individuals, families, and employers are available online at [coronavirus.gov](http://coronavirus.gov).

President Trump also announced that in parallel with the public health response, his administration is considering ways to mitigate the impact of the virus on our economy. Senate Republicans look forward to discussing this with Secretary Mnuchin and the President's team so we can all consider the best ways to move forward for the American people. As our government continues to prepare and protect our Nation, I would urge all of my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle in both Chambers, to put reflexive partisanship aside and stay focused on our common work to promote the common good. This virus does not care—does not care—about partisan divisions.

This disease poses a challenge, no question, but our Nation is strong, we are well equipped, and we have overcome far, far greater challenges before. As the Vice President put it yesterday, "We're all in this together."

S. 2657

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, this week, we have the opportunity to pass major legislation to strengthen our domestic energy. Chairman MURKOWSKI, Senator MANCHIN, and the Energy and Natural Resources Committee have assembled a strong, bipartisan bill. I look forward to passing it.

I was disappointed yesterday when the Senate failed to advance the legislation and clear a path toward completing the bill. The committee's product includes about 50 different bills and contributions from nearly three-fourths of the Members of this body, and contrary to the Democratic leader's assertions on the floor, I am certainly not blocking any bipartisan amendment. I have stated right here on the floor that I hope and anticipate that we will vote on amendments this week.

Don't be fooled by the finger-pointing. I am not standing in the way of bipartisan amendments. What is really

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S1641

happening is that the Democratic leader is moving the goalposts. There had been a bipartisan understanding about how to finish this bill, but yesterday the Democratic leader decided to change his tune and demand a vote on something outside the scope of the current debate. I hope we can get past this showmanship, finish this bipartisan legislation, and send it to the House so we can get it on the President's desk. Let's don't squander this real opportunity.

Chairman MURKOWSKI's and Senator MANCHIN's compromise product will help our Nation move toward greater energy security, energy efficiency, and energy affordability for years to come—new support for energy efficiency efforts, new incentives for innovation, new tools to secure our electrical grid, and new ways to strengthen our domestic supply chain for important minerals, and on and on and on.

This Chamber got it right last week when it proceeded to the bill by a vote of 90 to 4. It hasn't suddenly become controversial overnight. Everyone knows there are plenty of outside issues that Senators do not agree on. We should let ourselves agree on what we do agree on. Let me say that again: We should let ourselves agree on what we do agree on and complete this legislation this week.

Let's keep legislating. Let's get this done. The American people deserve it.

#### ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, now, on a final matter, this afternoon all Senators will have the opportunity to attend a briefing on election security from administration experts who tackle the issue every day. The FBI Director; the Acting Secretary of Homeland Security; General Nakasone of the NSA and Cyber Command; the Director of Counterintelligence at the DNI; and a number of other senior leaders will come here to the Capitol to discuss this critical subject.

I look forward to hearing more about the significant and strong steps the Trump administration has taken over the past 3 years to secure our democracy and punch back against the real and varied foreign efforts to interfere. I look forward to hearing more about the unprecedented level of coordination that has connected nonpartisan Federal experts in all 50 States, U.S. territories, thousands of local jurisdictions, and private sector leaders to make sure the unpreparedness and inaction that defined the Obama administration's failures in 2016 was not repeated in 2018 and will not be repeated in 2020 or beyond.

I look forward to hearing about how the record sums of money, hundreds of millions of dollars that Congress has put aside for direct grants so States and local election officials can shore up their systems, are making our democracy safer. I expect I will have more to say following the briefing. I expect

many of our colleagues will, but, beforehand, I would like to say this: The American people have confidence in our democracy, as they should. Just last month, a survey found that more than 70 percent of Americans are confident their State or local government will conduct a fair and accurate election this November. Let me say this again. Just last month, a survey found that more than 70 percent of Americans are confident their State or local government will conduct a fair and accurate election this November, and they should be confident about the resilience of our institutions.

Our Nation is strong. The Trump administration has made huge strides. After 8 years of weakness, this administration's foreign policy has made it clear to our adversaries that the United States of America is not going to be pushed around, but the American people also know we must remain vigilant. As long as Russia and other nations seek to meddle, we need to be ready.

Election security is critically important to our Nation, and it can only be handled right if it is handled with good faith and bipartisanship.

When Washington Democrats use this particular topic as a platform for demonizing the other side or for pushing tangential policy proposals, which the left had sought many years—many years—before 2016, everyone can see right through it. It only signals unseriousness.

So I encourage all my colleagues to attend the bipartisan briefing today, and then let's preserve that bipartisan spirit and that unity. Let's focus on fighting against foreign interference, not fighting each other.

We should not just snap right back into tired, old partisanship. We should not let Putin or anyone else bait Americans into talking down our own democracy or sowing more fear and discord among ourselves than other adversaries could ever hope to do themselves.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

#### MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 3422

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

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3422) to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land

Management, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Indian Education, and to provide permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and for other purposes.

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

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

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. Madam 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.

#### S. 2657

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, before I get into the remarks, substance, of coronavirus and H.R. 1, I would like to mention that Leader MCCONNELL did not give the right story when he talked about the Energy bill. I would remind people, 13 Democrats voted for cloture; 15 Republicans opposed cloture. I would remind the leader that it was a Republican, Senator KENNEDY, who led the charge to deny cloture, and it was well known that Democrats simply wanted an amendment on the Kennedy bill—a Republican amendment—wanted an ability to vote. Once again, because Leader MCCONNELL does not allow amendments and debate and, instead, just adds more items to his legislative graveyard, the bill went down. But 13 Democrats voted for cloture. If he had his Republican troops together, he might have been able to pass it anyway. To blame Democrats and say we are moving the goalpost is just a total misstatement of what happened.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on COVID, as our country continues to experience the spread of coronavirus, COVID-19, the effects are beginning to be more acutely felt. First and foremost, our hearts go out to the families of those who have lost loved ones during this illness. Second, our healthcare systems are under tremendous stress, businesses have been forced to cut back, and the virus is already starting to take a toll on the economy. As the impact of the coronavirus spreads, the administration appears to have shifted its focus, holding a press conference yesterday to talk about measures the administration might pursue to calm the markets.

I would remind the White House: By far, the best way to ensure economic security for the American people is to deal directly with the coronavirus itself. Again, getting a handle on the crisis and addressing the virus itself is by far the best way to respond to any negative effects on our economy.

The administration seems to believe that the answer to any problem is another tax cut. And no matter what they say about it when they put it together, it always seems to benefit the wealthy and the big and powerful corporations. This is a healthcare crisis; it demands a healthcare solution.

To borrow an expression: You must treat the disease, not the symptoms.

Mr. President, do you hear that? You must treat the disease—the coronavirus—not the symptom, which is the result of the coronavirus, which is the economy.

The President wakes up to a problem only after it has an effect on Wall Street, and his solutions are often aimed, misguidedly, only at calming the nerves on Wall Street. The real answer in this case is to protect the American people, focus on their health and economic security, and competently respond to the public health crisis at our doorstep.

Speaker PELOSI and I have mentioned several actions we could take, from paid sick leave for impacted workers to unemployment insurance, food and housing security, and protections against price gouging. But one thing the administration must focus on right now, above all, is fixing the problems we are having with testing.

The most powerful tool in responding to a virus is to know precisely where it is and how it is spreading. Because the administration took weeks before they developed an accurate test and because the administration was slow to ramp up the number of Americans tested and is now having trouble turning around the results of those tests at a fast enough pace, we are now far behind where we ought to be in understanding how far the virus has already spread.

The United States has the best hospitals, doctors, and scientists in the world. Yet, currently, we are lagging far behind other countries when it comes to testing our citizens. We are behind the United Kingdom, behind France, behind China, behind Switzerland, the Netherlands, Israel, Japan, and Italy. Every day we read a new story in the press about Americans having difficulty getting a test for coronavirus even though they are displaying symptoms. Our own Health and Human Services was unable to say how many Americans have been tested.

It is shocking; it is infuriating. If other countries can do this, why can't we? If other countries do it right, why can't we? South Korea, which has far more prevalent amounts of coronavirus, is already seeing the number of new reports go down because they have done extensive, thorough, and accurate testing.

The result here—why we are not doing as well as other countries is a direct result of the colossal failure of leadership and planning from this administration and this President. One word describes the Trump administration's response to the coronavirus so far: "Incompetence."

I know there are hard-working CDC scientists and experts trying to help the American people. The political appointees are the ones who don't seem to get it and are putting politics over the safety and security of the American people. And it goes right to the top. In the midst of a public health crisis—a serious and dangerous public health crisis—the President has repeatedly pushed unscientific claims about the coronavirus, the availability of a vaccine, and given bad advice—bad advice—to Americans who might have symptoms.

If the President would just keep quiet, it would be better than what he is doing, which is negative. What we really need is leadership. More than ever, we need the President to drop the conspiracy theories, end the Panglossian optimism, and the unscientific speculation. Now more than ever, we need President Trump to lead our government's response with competence and to be truthful with the American people. As I said yesterday, we are all rooting for that, but the President and his administration must take a hard look in the mirror, focus on the problem at hand, not the side effects, and get to work on fixing them.

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, H.R. 1—this past Sunday marked one year since the House passed H.R. 1, the For the People Act. This bill takes urgent and long overdue steps to renew our democracy. It will reverse the corrupting effects of Citizens United. It will restore protections for voting. And it will take aim at Washington's culture of corruption, which has run rampant under this administration.

It could not come at a better time. Every election, we see the sweeping power of big money. State legislatures have found new ways to deny Americans, often minorities, access to the ballot. Our adversaries—including the Russians—work day and night to influence our elections and sow confusion in the public sphere. H.R. 1 would forcefully and directly address each of these issues. But, like every other bill passed by the House over the past 2 years, it has been buried in Leader MCCONNELL's legislative graveyard. We must move it. This bill is about making our democracy work and giving American citizens some faith in the future.

Republicans, rather than working with Democrats to strengthen our democracy, have stood in the way. They have blocked election security legislation and sanctions to deter foreign adversaries from trying to interfere in our democracy. They have enabled

President Trump's assault on the separation of powers through their silence on the President's many abuses of power. Even today, the Republicans are putting forward a nominee for the Federal Election Commission who expressed doubts regarding the benefits of even the most reasonable restrictions on campaign spending, including disclosure.

When H.R. 1 first passed the House, Leader MCCONNELL called this bill to restore voting rights and get money out of politics a "terrible proposal" and a "power grab." If Leader MCCONNELL thinks that getting big money out of politics is a terrible idea, if he truly believes making it easier for Americans to vote is a power grab by Democrats, then God help the Republican Party and God help this country.

Democrats will not stop fighting for this bill, nor will we ever stop fighting to restore the democratic values that have guided our Nation for 2½ centuries. In the United States, each person's vote should have the same weight as everyone else's. That is a hallmark of our democracy. A fair and free election is the wellspring of our democracy. It is what Americans have died for in the battlefields around the world, what civil rights activists have marched for across the bridges and the generations. And though the Republican leader has been adamant in his opposition to this legislation, the American people, thank God, will have a chance this November to elect a new Senate that will move this country in a dramatically different direction.

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

ADVANCED GEOTHERMAL INNOVATION LEADERSHIP ACT OF 2019—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2657, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2657) to support innovation in advanced geothermal research and development, and for other purposes.

Pending;

Murkowski modified amendment No. 1407, in the nature of a substitute.

Portman/Shahen amendment No. 1514 (to amendment No. 1407), to establish greater energy efficiency and cost-effectiveness in building codes.

Shahen amendment No. 1525 (to amendment No. 1514), to modify the authorization of appropriations for cost-effective codes implementation for efficiency and resilience.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip is recognized.

#### 5G SPECTRUM

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, the United States is poised for nationwide deployment of the next generation of internet technology—5G. 5G will mark a giant leap forward for internet technology, delivering speeds that are up to 100 times faster than what today's technology can deliver. It will be vastly more responsive than 4G technology and will be able to connect 100 times the number of devices that can be connected with 4G.

While that will make it even easier to do the things we do today, like check our email or stream our favorite shows, the biggest benefits of 5G lie in the other technologies that it will enable—precision agriculture, medical and surgical innovations, safer vehicles, and more.

5G is already being deployed. Cities across the country, including Sioux Falls in my home State, are introducing 5G networks. There is still work to be done before 5G can be fully implemented nationwide. A big part of that work is freeing up adequate spectrum to support the technology.

Like all internet technology, 5G relies on radio spectrum, or what we commonly call the airwaves. In the United States, radio spectrum is owned by the American taxpayer but is licensed to companies that make use of the spectrum to broadcast TV and radio programs, connect cell phone calls, and transmit internet data. Radio spectrum is divided into bands—low-band, mid-band, and high-band—according to frequency and wavelength. Current wireless technology mostly relies on low-band spectrum, but 5G will require the full range of radio spectrum—low-band, mid-band, and high-band.

The United States has done a good job freeing up high-band spectrum for 5G, but we need to free up more mid-band spectrum to see full-scale 5G deployment. Mid-band spectrum is crucial for 5G. It combines strong data capacity with good geographical coverage and allows 5G signals to penetrate buildings in more urban areas. Mid-band spectrum is particularly crucial for rural 5G deployment, as it can provide the coverage and capacity to reach less populated areas.

As past chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee and current chairman of the Commerce Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Inno-

vation, and the Internet, I have been working on 5G for a number of years now. In 2018, Congress passed my MOBILE NOW Act, which laid the groundwork for freeing up more spectrum for 5G.

This past November, Senator WICKER and I introduced the 5G Spectrum Act to require the Federal Communications Commission to free up a critical portion of mid-band spectrum, commonly referred to as C band, for 5G use. While Congress did not enact our legislation, at the end of February, the Federal Communications Commission announced it would adopt a framework similar to that outlined in our bill to make 280 megahertz of C band spectrum available for 5G.

Currently, C band spectrum is licensed by satellite companies that use the spectrum to deliver programming for television and radio broadcasters, among other things. Under the FCC's new rules, the majority of this mid-band spectrum will be made available to wireless companies for 5G. Satellite companies will still be able to provide all the services they are currently providing by launching new satellites and investing in new technologies to make more efficient use of the C band. The licensees for the remaining portion of the C band spectrum will be returned to the government, which will then offer the spectrum to wireless companies in a public auction. Satellite companies will be reimbursed for the cost of relocating their operations to the upper range of the band, and they will be offered incentives for moving their operations quickly so that space for 5G can be freed up as soon as possible. I was very pleased by the FCC's decision, which I think provides the most expeditious and efficient way to free up the necessary mid-band spectrum for 5G.

Some have argued that rather than reimbursing satellite companies, the government should just pull the satellite companies' licenses, but there are a number of problems with that approach.

First of all, while it is true that radio spectrum is owned by the taxpayers, satellite companies have invested a lot of money to put the spectrum into service. While they will still have enough C-band spectrum to provide current services, shifting their operations to the upper band of the spectrum will require a substantial investment. It is fair that they be reimbursed for this government-required shift.

Furthermore, reimbursing companies and providing incentives for them to quickly free up spectrum is the fastest way to make that spectrum available. Simply demanding that companies relinquish their control of a substantial portion of the C band could tie the government up in litigation for years, while countries like China take the lead on 5G.

Finally, setting a precedent for the government to simply seize spectrum licenses would create a significant disincentive for technological investment.

Why should companies invest major sums of money in bringing next-generation technologies to market if they are likely to have the licenses on which those technologies depend seized without warning?

The truth is that the taxpayers will see a bigger return—for deficit reduction, rural broadband, and other priorities—if companies are incentivized to invest. The United States was at the head of the 4G revolution, and we need to ensure that we are at the head of the 5G revolution as well. Winning the race to 5G will provide huge economic benefits for American businesses and American workers, and it will allow the United States to set security standards for telecommunications networks worldwide.

I am very pleased that the FCC has acted to free up mid-band spectrum needed for full-scale deployment of 5G around the country. I will continue to work to ensure that American companies and American workers have the resources they need to bring us into the 5G future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip is recognized.

#### FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, perhaps later today or one day this week, we will have debate on the Senate floor and a vote, and that vote literally will decide the future for over 200,000 young Americans.

Politicians and elected officials are prone to exaggeration, but I don't exaggerate when I say that, because we will have an opportunity here to debate and vote on a system that was put in place years ago to protect students from being defrauded by the colleges they attend. It is called the borrower defense program. It was started years ago. It was really designed for that rare situation where a student would take out a government loan to go to college after the college made misrepresentations about the education it offered. The student would rely on those misrepresentations, sign up for the school, sign up for the government loan, and learn, to his disappointment, months or years later that the school had lied to him. The school may have told him: If you take this certain course at this school, you will qualify for a certain job or licensure. The school may have misrepresented to the student that the courses they took at the school could be transferred to other schools if the student decided to go to a different university to complete their education. The misrepresentation may have been something as basic as saying "All of our professors and instructors at this school have certain college degrees qualifying them to teach you," or the school may have misrepresented to the student that "If you complete this course, here are the jobs that will be readily available for you to fill."

Students listen to those promises, sometimes rely on them, oftentimes

signing loans with the Federal Government that need to be paid off later, and then they learn they were lied to.

Because they were defrauded or lied to or misrepresentations were made, we set up a provision in the law that said there is a way out for the student. You don't end up holding the bag here when a college or university which the United States government has recognized as accredited has lied to you. You are not left holding the bag. There is another way out. Our Department of Education will take a look at your circumstances and decide whether there is evidence that this school has lied to you or misrepresented, and if we find it, we can restructure or forgive some part or all of your student loan debt.

You know, that makes all the difference in the world to these students because here they are holding the bag, with tens, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars of debt because of lies that were made by the schools that tried to entice them into enrollment. It is called the borrower defense program.

Under President Obama, thousands of students came to the program and said: We were lied to by these schools.

Most of the schools are for-profit colleges and universities. One of the most notorious—Corinthian Colleges—is now bankrupt and gone, but for years, they were enticing thousands of Americans into their programs. They were signing up young students for courses, making them sign the loan agreements, and then after that was done, the students learned later on that the education was virtually worthless.

What happened to Corinthian? Well, the people who started this for-profit college and university did quite well, thank you. All these students paid thousands of dollars to them, and even though they misrepresented the school to the students, they ended up taking the money and going home, and the school faced bankruptcy, and the students are left holding the bag. That is the unfortunate reality we face. We can do something about it today.

The Secretary of Education, Mrs. DeVos, has decided to change the way students have to go through proving their losses, and that is why we are here today. The House has voted overwhelmingly saying Secretary DeVos's approach was unfair. I will describe to you why we think it is unfair.

What we are asking Members of the Senate to do today is take an honest look at the plight of these students and decide whether they are entitled to any relief under the proposal by Secretary DeVos. We estimate that fewer than 3 percent of the students will receive any kind of relief because of the approach she uses. What we can do today is reject that approach. This vote is not about any alternative approach. Though, we could sit down and actually negotiate a better way to deal with this. I have talked to Members on the Republican side about doing just that.

The first step is to stop this new rule by Secretary DeVos, and that will be

an opportunity we have today. If we stop these rules she has promulgated, then the students will have a chance to have some part of their student loan forgiven—perhaps all of it—if they can prove through evidence that they have been defrauded.

Let me be more specific about what we are facing here. In 1992, Congress added a provision to the Higher Education Act which I just described called the borrower defense program. It allowed student borrowers defrauded by their schools to have their Federal student loans discharged. Congress rightly didn't want students left holding the bag because the schools had been guilty of misconduct. It was really a little known or rarely used portion of the law until the year 2014 with the collapse of the for-profit giant Corinthian Colleges.

Corinthian had lied to students one after the other. They inflated their job placement rates, saying to students: Take these courses, and there are plenty of jobs waiting for you. They took out loans for students without the knowledge of the students, and then they lied to the students about employers' recognizing their degrees.

Yet Corinthian was not unique. Nearly every other major for-profit college has been the subject of multiple State and Federal investigations and lawsuits for similar predatory practices.

Since 2015—just 5 years ago—nearly 300,000 student borrowers, mostly from these for-profit colleges, have applied to our U.S. Department of Education for borrower defense discharges. They have said: We were lied to. These schools lied to us about what the education would mean to our futures. They enticed us into getting student loans, and we learned too late that we have been subjects of this fraud. Now, because our lives have been compromised with the great debts that we carry, we are asking for relief from a 1992 law that has been established.

Almost 220,000 of these students have pending claims with the U.S. Department of Education. Do you know how long they have been waiting for resolutions so they know if they can get on with their lives? Many of them have been waiting for years. The claims come from every State in the Union—large, small, red, blue, purple. It doesn't make any difference.

Sadly, it is not going to stop. The Department of Education's estimates show that nearly 200,000 student borrowers will be subject to illegal practices by their schools in 2021 alone. The schools continue to make these misrepresentations to students.

With the new borrower defense rule, Secretary DeVos at the Department of Education will make it virtually impossible for these future defrauded borrowers to receive the borrower defense discharge that Congress intended. The DeVos rule places unreasonable new burdens on defrauded borrowers, including requiring the student borrowers to submit evidence that they

will have to obtain by hiring lawyers and private detectives. For example, defrauded borrowers will have to show that the schools intentionally misled them. How are they supposed to do that?

In addition, the rule requires defrauded borrowers to apply and submit evidence individually instead of being able to apply as a group when many borrowers have experienced similar misconduct across a program or school.

Think about these schools that have been investigated by so many different States and have been found guilty of predatory practices, of exploiting these college students. The schools have been found guilty of defrauding these students in State, after State, after State. Under the new rule by Secretary DeVos, to be discharged under this borrower defense program, each one of the students has to essentially lawyer up. Each one of the students has to hire an investigator.

What is the likelihood that a student who is burdened with debt and is struggling to find a job is going to go out and make those expenditures? It is next to nothing. In fact, it turns out it is about 3 percent of the students who are likely to be able to take advantage of that. Secretary DeVos is basically telling these student borrowers: You are on your own. Lawyer up. Hire a private detective to find the evidence.

This is unfair and unrealistic. We need to go no further than the Department's own statistics to realize that 97 percent of the students have no chance under this DeVos rule. By the experts' best testimony, only 3 percent have a chance of recovering under this new approach. That is the rule we will get a chance to vote on this week, whether that rule should continue.

The Department claims that these new hurdles for borrowers are necessary to guard against fraudulent claims made by students, but there is no evidence—none—of widespread fraud on the part of borrowers among the 300,000 borrower defense claims that have already been submitted. In fact, the Department itself notes that it does not have sufficient information to determine the extent of any potential fraud by students. There is no evidence whatsoever of this notion that Secretary DeVos's rule is needed because of fraud by borrowers. The new rule just means that defrauded borrowers with legitimate claims are not going to get relief.

The Department also claims the DeVos rule protects taxpayers by shifting the burden of relief from the taxpayers to the schools that commit misconduct. Yet it then turns around and acknowledges that other changes in the rule will, in fact, reduce recoveries from schools compared to the 2016 rule, and that means more cost for taxpayers.

The truth is, of the small amount of relief that will be awarded under the DeVos rule, schools will be on the hook for about one-third of it at the most. In

reality, the DeVos rule achieves savings on the backs of the borrowers who are victims of fraud. It eliminates \$11 billion in relief while it reduces the share of relief that the schools which are guilty of fraud have to pay.

The Department also acknowledges that the DeVos rule is not expected to significantly change the percentage of loan volume subject to misconduct. In other words, this rule will not only generate less money from the offending schools, but it will be less likely to discourage future misconduct by the same schools. On the other hand, the former Department inspector general said the 2016 rule would “avoid costs to students and taxpayers that result from school closures.”

I could go on, but the bottom line is this: If we want to stop this insidious practice of defrauding students and having them pile up debt from schools that are phony and that eventually all go out of business, we have to have a program that is sensitive to the needs of the student borrowers and that puts these schools that are guilty of misconduct on the hook for the payoff rather than the taxpayers.

The DeVos rule eliminates the prohibition in the 2016 rule that prevents schools from using mandatory arbitration and class action restriction as a condition of student enrollment. What is mandatory arbitration? It is basically saying to the students and their families: You can't go to court. You have to go into a closed room, sit across the table from one of our lawyers, and take it or leave it.

That is what mandatory arbitration is all about. Class action restrictions mean that the students of one school that defrauded thousands of students can't come together in any kind of legal action.

You don't see those kinds of provisions for mandatory arbitration and class action restrictions in the contracts that most students run into when they sign up at colleges and universities. It is almost exclusively in the area of private, for-profit colleges and universities. The clauses are often buried in stacks of enrollment documents that students rarely, if ever, read. It means that the schools can defraud and mislead students and that they are protected from being held accountable in court. Businesses around America are held accountable for their conduct and misconduct. Why would we let the for-profit colleges and universities off the hook?

Students have nowhere else to turn other than to the taxpayers through this borrower defense program that we are discussing here. Instead of allowing borrowers to hold their schools directly accountable for misconduct in court, Secretary DeVos's rule shields these schools from accountability and puts American taxpayers on the hook.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter that was published in the Charlotte Observer over the weekend. It was written by Shaun Joyce, of Greensboro, NC.

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

[From the Charlotte Observer, Mar. 8, 2020]

A DWINDLING DEFENSE AGAINST A FRAUDULENT SCHOOL, BIG LOANS

(By Shaun Joyce)

I'm one of 300,000 people who applied for “borrower defense,” a government rule that is supposed to cancel federal student loan debt for borrowers who have been scammed by their schools, almost 8,000 of us from North Carolina. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has made it harder for defrauded students by rewriting the borrower defense rule with so many restrictions that only 3 percent of the people who were lied to by their schools will get the relief the law says they should.

Fortunately, the U.S. House of Representatives has already voted to strike down DeVos' rewrite, and the Senate is set to vote on it later this month. This won't help my situation because of when I took out my student loans, but I'm hoping that North Carolina Sens. RICHARD BURR and THOM TILLIS will stand up for people cheated by predatory colleges—and pass the bill to provide some justice. I always thought college would be the magic key to unlock opportunity and open the door to the life I wanted. My mother had to drop out before she earned her degree, but always told me, “Go to school.” After learning about the Art Institute of Charlotte, I thought,

“Here's my chance,” envisioning a future as a video game designer. Art Institute recruiters at a college fair convinced me the school was perfect for me. A week later, a representative barely glanced at my portfolio, more interested in selling me and my mother on all sorts of loans. She said the school would prepare me for the job market and connect me to people who could help me land a job. My Bachelor's would cost me around \$64,000, an amount that seemed a little intimidating. But she talked about a number of options—all loans—to help pay for it. She assured me that if my mother didn't qualify for a parent PLUS loan, the school itself would cosign loans for me.

We signed. I was on my way to earning the college degree that would change my life. And it did. But not in any way I would want.

Today, I owe nearly \$100,000 for a degree that didn't prepare me for a job within the gaming industry. I work writing on-hold telephone messages for a marketing company and attend one class at a time at my local community college, working toward a degree in biology—none of my Art Institute classes transferred.

The Art Institute of Charlotte shut down two years ago, but my degree was worthless before then. None of my classes had anything to do with video game design. The school kept pushing me to take out more loans, and I didn't feel I could leave. I still had my dreams—and, as a young black man, the last thing I wanted to do was become just another statistic by dropping out. I switched to an Associate's in hopes of saving money.

When I asked about career opportunities, my adviser sent me Craig's List job postings in California. I never saw any great opportunities. I'm not the only one. Hundreds of thousands of people like me have attended colleges that failed to educate them, left them with crushing debt, and shut down for predatory lending and fraudulent recruitment.

I hope Congress comes through to provide these people struggling and in debt through no fault of their own with some relief. Senators Burr and Tillis should vote yes on Senate Joint Resolution 56.

Shaun Joyce is a 2010 graduate of the Art Institute of Charlotte. He lives in Greensboro, N.C.

Mr. DURBIN. Shaun is one of nearly 6,000 borrowers from North Carolina who have applied to the Department for a borrower defense discharge. He attended the Art Institute of Charlotte and thought it was his path to having a successful future. He was told by recruiters that the school would prepare him for a job in video game designing and that those at the school would connect him with people who would help him land that job. That is a pretty serious promise to a young person, isn't it? He said they kept pushing him to take on more and more courses and more and more debt. Eventually, he had so much debt that he felt there was no other option than to finish the degree. He had to go all in with this school, the Art Institute of Charlotte.

He writes: “[As] a young black man, the last thing I wanted to do was become just another statistic by dropping out [of school].”

Shaun owes nearly \$100,000 in student loan debt today for a degree that did not prepare him for a job in the very industry he was promised. When he asked the Art Institute of Charlotte about career opportunities, do you know where they sent him? Craigslist.

As of today, Shaun's work is in writing on-hold telephone messages for a marketing company, and he attends one class at a time at his community college at which none—not one—of his Art Institute credits can be transferred. He has asked the Senate to overturn the DeVos rule. He knows the struggles defrauded student borrowers go through.

I want to share with you a story of a U.S. Army veteran whose name is Jarrod Thoma. Jarrod is from the State of Colorado. After Jarrod left the Army, he wanted to pursue his lifelong passion for electronics by pursuing a degree in engineering. He signed up at the for-profit DeVry University in Westminster, CO. He said he quickly realized he was not getting the quality education it had promised. Course materials and the equipment for instruction were subpar and not as advertised.

He says: “Although DeVry was more than happy to cash all of my GI Bill benefits, my complaints about quality [of the courses they were offering] fell on deaf ears.”

When he tried to transfer, he found out that his credits wouldn't transfer to a public university or even a community college even though DeVry had promised him they would.

In addition to using his entire GI bill benefit for serving this country, he accumulated \$52,000 in additional student loan debt in order to finish his program at DeVry.

On top of that, Jarrod says: “Upon entering the job market, I quickly found that the degree . . . was not worth the paper it was printed on, and it actually hurt my job prospects.”

Jarrod is waiting, along with 3,800 other Coloradans, for the Department



to act on his borrower defense request, and he has urged the Senate to overturn the DeVos rule in order to help future veteran borrowers like him.

Let me also show you Tasha Berkhalter. I met her recently. She is a U.S. Army veteran from Lima, OH. She enrolled at ITT Tech, which is another notorious for-profit school. After she had been honorably discharged from serving in our U.S. Army, she was promised by ITT that her GI bill benefits would cover the cost for the program and that her program would lead to a job in her field after graduation.

At one point, she tried to transfer, only to find out that other schools wouldn't accept the credits she had earned at ITT Tech. She didn't have any options. She had to finish at ITT. Not only did she exhaust her entire GI bill benefits at ITT Tech, but she had to take on additional Federal student loans despite all of ITT's assurances that was not going to happen. Tasha's student loan debt today for having attended ITT Tech is almost \$100,000 beyond her GI bill benefits—all for a degree that she says no employer takes seriously.

Of course, this puts a lot of pressure on her now. Tasha is married and has a family. She is facing overwhelming stress, anxiety, and depression because of the miserable experience she had with this for-profit school, ITT Tech, and the student debt she incurred.

She served our country, and she risked her life for America. When it came to her GI bill benefits, she lost all of it at this for-profit school. She is asking for a chance to start over with her life, and our vote on the Senate floor may decide that. She even questions herself as a wife and as a mother of four young children because she is unable to provide for her family as she is still unable to get a job in her field. She has lost cars, homes, and has had to move from State to State. She supports overturning the DeVos borrower defense rule because she wants defrauded veterans like her to have a shot at relief.

Veterans like Jarrod and Tasha are the reason that I bring this matter to the floor and ask my Republican and Democratic colleagues to join me. So many of us give speeches about our appreciation for the veterans and their service to our country. So many of us voted for the GI bill benefit package. We said to veterans: We owe it to you. You served our country. We want to be on your side after that service so you can build good lives in America.

Then schools like Corinthian and schools like ITT Tech defraud these students out of their GI bill benefits and pile additional debt on top of them. That is why this has become such a major veterans issue.

Take a look at the veterans organizations that support the measure that I bring to the floor today: the American Legion—and I am going to quote from a letter from its national commander in just a moment; the Student Vet-

erans of America; the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America; the National Military Family Association; the Paralyzed Veterans of America; the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; VetsFirst; Veterans for Common Sense; and Veterans Education Success.

I would like to show you this last poster here. It is a letter that I received from Bill Oxford. Bill, as you can see, is the national commander of the American Legion. He wrote to me on behalf of 2 million American Legion members whom he represents because he wanted to go on the record and give me a chance to bring this evidence before my fellow Senators, Republicans and Democrats. Many of them are being visited today by representatives of these veterans organizations, including the American Legion. I hope they can spare a minute of their time in their offices in honor of these veterans and listen to the pleas they are going to make for a vote in favor of the measure I am going to bring before the Senate.

Here is what Bill wrote in his letter to me: "Thousands of student veterans have been defrauded over the years—promised their credits would transfer when they wouldn't, given false or misleading job placement rates in marketing, promised one educational experience . . . but given something completely different." Bill calls this rule by Secretary DeVos "fundamentally rigged against defrauded borrowers" and writes that it "flagrantly denies defrauded veterans [fair and timely] decisions [on their claims]."

Bill closes his letter by calling on Congress to overturn the DeVos rule.

How many times have each of us stood on the floor and talked about honoring the sacrifices of men and women who serve our country in uniform?

Well, we have a chance to do it with a vote this week—to put our votes where all of our speeches have been. We have a chance to stand up not just for the American Legion but for all the veterans groups that I referred to before, to give defrauded student veterans and student loan borrowers a fair shot at the Federal student debt relief that Congress intended for them.

We don't do many things on a bipartisan basis around here anymore, and it is a shame. I hope this will be an exception. Frankly, all of us have given these speeches on both sides of the aisle. All of us have said how much these veterans and their families mean to us. Well, now they are asking us to be on their side with this vote.

I am urging my colleagues to show America that, when it comes to supporting our veterans, the Senate, on a bipartisan basis, can come together and do the right thing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LOEFFLER). The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, student debt and student loans are a fre-

quent topic of conversation, and, of course, that is what we are discussing here today. As someone who took about 20 years to pay off my law school loans, this is personal. Fortunately, I was able to do so due to generous interest rates and lending that helped facilitate people pursuing higher education and beyond.

Across the United States, student loan debt totals nearly \$1.6 trillion and is made up of some 45 million borrowers. As more and more Americans are going to college and beyond, which is a good thing, this widespread problem isn't going to go away any time soon.

I agree that we need to take some action here in Washington to address the financial burden for those with existing debt and to help give prospective students a better understanding of what the debt that they will assume will mean to them in their future life, before it is too late.

One of the leading candidates for President on the other side of the aisle, Mr. SANDERS, has suggested that we just make education free and that we eliminate all debt. Well, that is a fantasy. There is no such thing as free. I am tempted to quote Milton Friedman, who said: There is no such thing as a free lunch. Of course, what he meant by that is that somebody, eventually, will pay. It may not be the immediate person who is the object of your bounty, but somebody will pay.

It is not financially responsible to just suggest that you are going to wipe away all debt, and it is certainly not fair to those who worked hard to earn the money to pay for their school only to find that those who did not find themselves with no debt. We have to come up with some commonsense answers, not just live in a fantasy land. Of course, to say that we are going to wipe away the debt is not fair to the parents who started saving for their kids' college even before they started walking or to the college student who worked multiple jobs to graduate with little or no debt at all or decided to go to community college at a lower cost before they then transferred to a 4-year institution and found a way to mitigate or keep their debt manageable. This idea of wiping away debt or making everything free is unfair to the person who chose not to go to college, only then to be saddled with someone else's debt. That is not fair.

So the problem with wiping away debt is that it is never really gone. You just pass the responsibility on to someone else, and we see that concept—that mentality—at play here today, when it comes to this rule promulgated by the Trump administration that our friends across the aisle seek to reverse.

Last fall, the Department of Education took a big step to forgive loans for students who have been defrauded by an institution of higher education without placing a serious burden on taxpayers. I think that is a good thing. People who commit fraud ought to be

held to account and those loans should be forgiven, but the burden should not be placed on taxpayers.

There have been similar regulations around for decades, and, in 2016, the Obama administration made some serious changes that actually broadened the types of claims a student can make. They issued a rule that said a school's substantial misrepresentation could result in a student's loans being forgiven.

But if my time in a courtroom taught me anything, it is that a good lawyer could portray even a factually accurate advertisement as somehow a misrepresentation, and there is no requirement that it be material but just that there be some abstract misrepresentation.

I don't have any doubt about the intent of the law and that the intention is good, but the concept is far too broad and the sad truth is, being so broad, it is ripe for abuse, and that is exactly what the current rule in place sought to change—to maintain the ability to relieve debt as a result of fraud, but not make it so broad that it was subject to further abuse.

The new rule establishes a clear standard for students to get individual debt relief and helps those impacted by school closures to find a way to finish their degree. It also takes big steps to hold schools accountable, which I believe is absolutely critical. We have this strange system where the school itself receives the tuition but has no accountability if the student is unable to complete their course of study or ends up getting a degree or a certificate in something that does not generate the income they need in order to pay that debt back. So we need to find ways to hold schools responsible, as well—as well as prevent predatory behavior from impacting more students, for example, targeting of veterans and then draining their GI bill benefits and leaving them with basically nothing to show for it. Those are the types of things we ought to be focusing on.

Overall, this rule—the underlying rule that our Democratic colleagues seek to reverse—includes commonsense reforms to ensure it achieves the goal of helping students who are defrauded, while preventing taxpayers from footing the bill for a far-too-broad definition of what constitutes a misrepresentation.

It is disappointing to see that they are trying to take us back to the previous rule, which was so ripe for abuse. In doing so, it would cause serious harm to students and schools and to the American taxpayer. They will end up left holding the bag.

Rather than zeroing out the loan balance for tens of millions of borrowers or allowing broad and vague allegations of fraud, we need to look at targeted changes that can make a huge difference. One place that I mentioned a moment ago where we need to focus is our veterans. I have heard from a number of my constituents who are

straddled with student debt—many before the time they actually served in the military.

If someone goes to college after leaving the military, the GI bill of rights will cover a substantial part of their education. But what about those who went to college or graduate school before they went into the military, those who took out loans prior to their service?

Well, in most cases, the GI bill cannot be applied retroactively, and servicemembers are left footing the bill for an education that otherwise would have been covered if they had gone to school after their military service.

Well, I don't think we should categorically exempt student debt and tuition incurred before military service and thus make the GI bill of rights, if you go into the military after that, worth basically nothing. These men and women should have the choice and the flexibility to use the benefits they have earned to pay off their student loans—in other words, use their GI bill of right retroactively, just as they would be able to use them pursuing a new degree.

I will be introducing legislation soon to make that change and to help our servicemembers address loan debt using the benefits that they have already earned.

We can't just look at preexisting debt, though. We need to ensure that prospective students are making wise financial decisions on the front end. Unfortunately, that is easier said than done. There is no clear system that makes it easy for students to compare financial aid packages from one school to another and to decide what the true cost of each will be. Many times, it is like comparing apples and oranges, and sometimes it can be downright misleading.

Depending on how a school displays information about scholarships or other financial information, the difference in the pricetag can be pretty stark. It doesn't matter whether you are a 17-year-old heading straight to college from high school or somebody who has been in the workforce for years and is now heading back to school. The process is far too confusing, and it does not need to be.

There are a lot of resources to help students get a clearer picture about their loan obligations and their expected salary after graduation and how that will impact their loan payments. Every student who incurs a penny of debt ought to have the information they need to be able to determine what amount of debt is acceptable in light of their future earning capacity and whether they will actually be able to get a degree that will allow them to pay back the money they borrowed for their school.

I believe that is a shared responsibility. Not only is that something that the student bears responsibility for, but I think the school they attend bears responsibility as well.

At the very least, we ought to provide accurate information. For example, the Department of Education has a calculator on their website that lets students calculate the net price of a degree before ever deciding which school to go to or what kind of loan to take out.

The issue, though, is that this information isn't always easy to find and colleges and universities are not doing a great job at promoting it. That needs to change.

I am a proud cosponsor of several pieces of legislation that would help prospective students better understand the cost of their higher education on the front end.

Three of these bills have been introduced by our friend from Iowa, Senator GRASSLEY, and would simplify the process for prospective students. One of these bills would standardize the format in terms of financial aid so that students aren't comparing apples to oranges; they are actually comparing apples to apples. Another would improve both the effectiveness and access to net-price calculators to help students make informed decisions before even deciding where to apply. The third would strengthen student loan counseling requirements to schools, so students are made aware of every option available, making it less likely that they will borrow more than they are likely to be able to repay.

So despite what our colleagues across the aisle are saying, outright loan forgiveness across the board isn't the only path here. There are other options which I intend to pursue to make incremental changes that will have a huge impact on people working to repay their student debt without spreading that burden to each and every single American taxpayer. While these ideas may not fit on a bumper sticker, that does not mean they are not worth pursuing.

I look forward to working with our colleagues to try to address this problem of mounting student debt and the difficulty many students have of paying that debt back because of misinformation or bad decisions they made, unaided by the schools they attend, to determine whether the degree they are pursuing and the debt they are incurring is actually realistic in light of their future income-earning capacity. We can address this sensibly and responsibly and in a way that does not affect each and every American taxpayer.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. 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, later today the Senate will be taking up the borrower defense CRA vote and likely voting on it tomorrow. Each and every Senator will have a choice. They can side with working students, or they can side with predatory, for-profit colleges. It should not be a hard choice, and that choice certainly should not be partisan.

Students who were cheated and defrauded by predatory, for-profit colleges are often left with crushing debt and no path forward. That is why President Obama issued the borrower defense rule—to help students move forward with their lives and education and to get the debt relief they so urgently need.

Since taking office, Secretary DeVos has put up roadblock after roadblock for students and borrowers. First, she refused to implement the borrower defense rule that was on the books, until a court forced her to. She stalled on debt relief for hundreds of thousands of borrowers who were left waiting for an answer, with tens of thousands of them falling into default and collections. Once again, the Federal courts were forced to step in.

Now Secretary DeVos is trying to deny full relief to students who were clearly cheated by predatory colleges. For so many people, getting relief on your student debt means the difference between making ends meet or not, the difference between paying your rent or not, and the difference between getting back on your feet or not.

Now, to make matters even worse, Secretary DeVos has gone further than just delaying and limiting the relief. She has issued a disastrous new borrower defense rule intentionally designed to make it harder for defrauded borrowers—defrauded borrowers—to get relief even when predatory colleges clearly violated the law. It will prevent students from getting their day in court and let predatory colleges off the hook financially. This rule says, in the fine print, that students will be stuck repaying 97 percent of their fraudulent debt. The Department even admitted that students will be cheated out of \$2.5 billion per year, and students will only get 3 cents back for every dollar of fraud they experience. That is cruel and wrong.

The Congressional Review Act, or CRA, would immediately halt Secretary DeVos's rule in its tracks and prevent it from going into effect.

It is time to put an end to the non-stop efforts by this administration to prioritize the interests of predatory, for-profit schools over the interests of our students. It is time for Senators to decide, once and for all, if they will support our student loan borrowers who have been cheated out of a quality education or help corrupt institutions with their bottom line.

I want to personally thank Senator DURBIN for his tireless efforts to push this important issue forward.

I yield the floor.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, if your car is a lemon, you don't sue the bank; you sue the dealer. A college can be a lemon, just like a car can be. A college could promise a potential student a job and then tell them that 50 percent of their students scored perfectly on their SAT tests. The potential student might use that information to take out student loans and enroll in a college. Then, if the information turns out to be false, the student may be stuck with student loans they can't afford to repay. Unlike a car, if your college is a lemon, you do sue the bank, and the bank is the taxpayer.

Today, Democrats are forcing the Senate to vote on a Congressional Review Act that, if passed, would overturn the Trump administration's borrower defense rule. This process allows a borrower of a Federal student loan to have their loan forgiven if their institution misled them and that misrepresentation led to financial harm.

First, if your college closes, it is important for you to know that your loans are forgiven. Let me say that again. If your college closes, it is important for you to know that your student loan is forgiven.

There are about 6,000 colleges and universities in our country, and 783 of them closed in 2018. For example, when Corinthian College closed, that made a lot of news. Many students, though, transferred to another college. But if they didn't transfer, they weren't stuck with their student loans; their loans were forgiven.

We are not talking about that today when we vote. If your college isn't closing but it does defraud or mislead you, then you can file a claim. You can file a claim to have your loan forgiven, and you file it with the U.S. Department of Education.

There are 42 million Americans with an outstanding Federal student loan. In 2018, about 106,000 of those 42 million Americans filed what we call borrower defense claims. They claimed they were misled by the college when they used their student loan to go to that college.

In November 2016, the Obama administration issued a rule that required a borrower to demonstrate only that they had been misled, not that they had been financially harmed. The Trump administration fixes that overly broad regulation, while still protecting borrowers and the taxpayer.

Here is the difference. Under the Obama administration, if one student had filed a claim and proved that he or she had been defrauded, all the other students in that program had to do was attest they had been misled in a similar way before having their loans forgiven as well. It was sort of a class action.

It was unnecessary for the first student or subsequent students to prove they had been financially harmed by

that misrepresentation. What this meant is, if you went to a school that had misled students, your loan could be forgiven even if you had a job making \$85,000 a year.

Under the Trump administration, each student needs to file a claim, prove that they were defrauded and that they were financially harmed, and then their loan would be forgiven by the taxpayer. Remember, the bank is the taxpayer.

Secretary DeVos's borrower defense rule restores the original intent of the law that a borrower must be misled and harmed.

The new rule establishes a fair and clear process as to what a borrower must demonstrate: No. 1, that the school misled them; No. 2, that the student relied on that information to enroll in the school; and No. 3, that the student was financially harmed. The new rule gives the borrower ample time to submit a claim and ensures that the Department is basing their judgment on all available information.

The DeVos rule also protects the taxpayers who spend roughly \$100 billion a year on Federal student loans. It continues to allow the Secretary to recoup funds from an institution that has defrauded or misled borrowers. It encourages borrowers and the institution to resolve issues directly rather than involving the Federal Government.

And the new rule allows the Department to evaluate the level of harm to each individual borrower filing the claim and forgives the appropriate amount. For example, if you were told by the school that you would make \$45,000 a year when you graduated, but you are only making \$40,000, the Department could decide to forgive a part of your loan.

The Obama administration's rules went too far and allowed borrowers to have their loans forgiven whether or not they had actually suffered financial harm. Secretary DeVos's new borrower defense rule restores the original intent of the law that the borrower must be misled and harmed.

I encourage Senators to vote against today's Congressional Review Act.

I yield the floor.

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:10 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:31 p.m., recessed until 2:10 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

#### ADVANCED GEOTHERMAL INNOVATION LEADERSHIP ACT OF 2019—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 1

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, it has been 1 year since the House of Representatives passed the most comprehensive package of anti-corruption

reforms since Watergate—1 year. H.R. 1 shines a light on secret campaign contributions, makes it easier to vote, and cleans up corruption in Washington. It is the solution to the gridlock that the American people are tired of in our Nation's Capital. But for 1 year, H.R. 1 has gathered dust on Majority Leader MCCONNELL's desk.

Every single Senator in the Democratic Congress and in our caucus here in the Senate is cosponsoring the For the People Act, which is Senator MERKLEY's and my companion bill to H.R. 1, For the People Act, but it is buried deep in the leader's legislative graveyard.

Over the course of the last year, as the For the People Act has languished, tens of millions of dollars were spent—much of it in secret—to influence the policymaking process.

Almost half a dozen States passed new laws restricting voter rights. The U.S. Supreme Court gave the green light to political gerrymandering. And President Trump, visiting his own properties dozens of times, funneled millions of taxpayer dollars into his own pocket. Yet, the Republican Senate is silent—silent as our democracy faces a crisis like none we have ever seen in our lifetimes.

We can draw a straight line from the crisis in our democracy to more than 300 bipartisan bills buried in the majority leader's graveyard. The bills waiting for Senate action are broadly supported by the American people, but they are opposed by the ultrawealthy, the special interests, the powerful corporations in that they try to buy our elections. Like Senator MCCONNELL, these Big Money interests are proud of killing these bills.

Here is what happened over the year that the For the People Act has been in the majority leader's graveyard: The number of Americans without health insurance increased by hundreds of thousands. California wildfires, worsened by climate change, cost \$25 billion. Flooding in the Midwest, also a casualty of climate change, cost \$12.5 billion. And 22 people were gunned down at an El Paso Walmart by a White nationalist armed with an assault rifle. Sadly, that was just a fraction of the thousands of gun-related deaths in our country last year.

This is not the America that the American people want. The American people want us to act. The gap between what the American people are clamoring for and what the Republican majority in the Senate is giving them is as wide as the Grand Canyon and is growing by the day.

Just look at the polls. Staggering numbers—closing in on 90 percent of Americans—support universal, affordable healthcare. With these numbers, you would think Republicans would be making sure that every American has healthcare, but, instead, Republicans have tried to dismantle the Affordable Care Act every chance they get. As we speak, President Trump and 18 Repub-

lican Governors and attorneys general are urging the Supreme Court to strike down the Affordable Care Act.

The American people want exorbitant prescription drug prices reeled in. Eighty percent of Americans think the cost of prescription drugs is far too high, and we all know that Big Pharma is the reason why. Yet legislation to reduce drug costs is also stuck—stuck among the hundreds of other bills on the majority leader's desk. Over the last two-plus decades, Big Pharma has spent \$3.7 billion—yes, that is billion—on lobbying. So today the same vial of insulin, which cost \$175 15 years ago, costs more than \$1,400 today. As a result, some diabetics ration their insulin, and some, as a result, have died.

It is not just our healthcare. The ability of our planet to support human life as we know it is at stake. Time and again, polling tells us the American people want us to tackle climate change. The American people accept the science. They understand the existential threat. Yet dozens of climate change bills lie dead in the Senate, including my Renewable Electricity Standard Act, to move us to 100 percent clean energy by midcentury.

Nearly 70 percent of Americans, including a majority of Republicans, believe we need to take aggressive action to fight climate change, and almost 80 percent believe the government should invest more in renewable energy resources. With these kinds of numbers, you would think Congress would be passing climate change legislation on a regular basis, except you would be wrong. Why?

Well, an expert analysis found that from 2000 to 2016, \$2 billion was spent on lobbying regarding climate policy, and the fossil fuel interests outspent environmental public interest groups by a factor of 10 to 1. This is not democracy at work. This is a complete perversion of our democratic ideals.

But the good news is we can change all of this. We can reinvigorate our democracy. We can end the reign of Big Money, empower small donors, make it easier to vote, stop political gerrymandering, and bring ethical conduct to Washington. The majority leader just needs to stop doing the bidding of the wealthy special interests and bring the For the People Act to the Senate floor.

I know my colleague Senator MERKLEY is here and Senator BENNET, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator CARDIN.

I yield to Senator CARDIN. Thank you all for being here today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I want to thank Senator UDALL for his leadership on the For the People Act, and I want to thank Senator MERKLEY for his leadership on this bill.

This bill contains many provisions that deal with the fundamental values of this country. I also am proud of my colleague in the House of Representa-

tives, Congressman SARBANES, who is the lead sponsor of H.R. 1, which is the For the People Act. It passed the House of Representatives over a year ago, and there has been no action on the floor of the Senate as a result of the majority leader's decision not to bring these bills to the floor.

As I said, it includes a lot of different bills that all deal with America's values. These are the values that are the strength of this Nation—free and fair elections. That is what we promote globally because we know that is key to a stable democratic society. Yet when you look at the way we conduct elections in this country, we are not setting a very high example. Look at how much money is involved in elections in this country. From the President of the United States to our local offices, too much money speaks to who is going to be able to get the attention of the voters. We need to change that.

We know that suppression of voters has been institutionalized as a strategy to win office. That should have no place in America. We should want the maximum amount of voters to participate in our political process, not try to prevent people from exercising their right to vote.

The For the People Act brings about meaningful change so that America, which is the shining example of democracy, can lead the world by the way we conduct our own elections. Let me mention two provisions that I am particularly pleased are included in the For the People Act. One is democracy restoration; that is, to allow those who have been convicted of crime, after they have served their penalty, to be able to participate in elections. We are one of only a few western democracies that permanently disenfranchise an individual who has been convicted of a felony. There are 6.1 million adults who currently are disenfranchised as a result of that provision, yet only 22 percent of those individuals are incarcerated. The other 78 percent have paid their penalty, have done their time, and are now reintegrated into society. It is in our interest to have them participate in our democratic system. It reduces recidivism. And, quite frankly, it is targeted at people of color. They are who have been most disenfranchised as a result of this provision. Thirty-four States still have restrictions, and 12 have lifetime restrictions on those convicted of a felony. The Democracy Restoration Act would remedy that situation.

The second bill I am going to refer to very briefly is the Deceptive Practices and Voter Prevention Act that targets primarily minority voters to suppress their vote. It is the modern Jim Crow laws in which we find we are using modern technology. We have campaign strategies aimed at minority communities to give them misinformation about how they can vote or whether they are eligible to vote or where they can vote. That is being used today. We have to make sure that doesn't happen in the American election system.

For the People provides meaningful changes so that we don't allow suppression of votes to be an institutionalized strategy to try to win an election, so that we have the maximum participation of voters in our process, and it deals with the ever-flowing increase in the amount of dollars that are put into American elections.

The U.S. Senate should not be a graveyard. Majority Leader McCONNELL has prevented hundreds of bills—bipartisan bills—from coming to the floor of the U.S. Senate. It has been a year since we have had the For the People Act passed by the House of Representatives. It is well past time for the Senate to take up this legislation so that we can show the American people we support the values that have made America the great democracy in our country.

Thank you very much.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, Shakespeare's great play "Hamlet" began with the phrase: Something is rotten in Denmark.

Well, something is rotten in Congress, and what is rotten in Congress is dark money. Citizens United—perhaps one of the most foolish decisions ever rendered by the U.S. Supreme Court—opened unlimited spending into our politics, which benefits whom? It benefits those who have unlimited money to spend and a motive to spend it in politics. That is not a group of people whose voices were not being heard here already. That is the favored group. But Citizens United opened the door for them to spend unlimited money, and then the Supreme Court failed to police its own decision. Its own decision said this unlimited spending was going to be independent of candidates and transparent to the public. Well, they are 0 for 2. It has been a decade, and they have never even tried to enforce the basic predicates of their decision. It is a shameful, shameful effort by the Court. Now, as a result, we have throughout our politics this dark money tsunami of slime.

How bad is it? These groups have spent \$4.5 billion since Citizens United—\$4.5 billion trying to influence Congress. Do you think they were doing that in the public interest? Of course not. Do you wonder why bills die here in the legislative graveyard of the Senate? Take a guess.

Outside groups—these phony-baloney front groups for these big special interests—are now outspending candidates in races. In fact, in the decade after Citizens United, outside groups outspend candidates in 126 different congressional races. And it is a very small group of people behind it. The top 10 donor households gave a combined \$1.1 billion to these front groups. Do you think they were looking out for the public interests? Dream on.

Who are the big spenders of this dark money? National Rifle Association;

Americans for Prosperity, which is the Koch brothers front group; Crossroads GPS, which is Karl Rove's front group; and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the champions of climate denial and obstruction.

Do you want to know why we are not getting things done around here? It is because billions of dollars are being spent secretly by special interests to shut things down, and it is creeping now even into the courts. The Federalist Society, which is picking our judges, is at the center of a \$250 million dark money network. A group that ran the campaigns against Garland and for Gorsuch and then afterward for Kavanaugh got an individual \$17 million donation for each of those two campaigns. It is actually probably the same donor, which means somebody out there anonymously gave \$35 million to determine the makeup of the U.S. Supreme Court, and we don't know who that is. We don't know what business they have before the Court.

As I said, Hamlet begins with "something is rotten in . . . Denmark." Something is rotten in Congress, and the rot is creeping over to the Supreme Court, and it is dark money, and it is the patriotic and decent thing to do to extirpate this menace.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, last year, I was proud to stand with my colleagues as we introduced the For the People Act in the Senate just weeks after it passed the House of Representatives. This measure has already passed the House of Representatives.

If you took civics 101, they explain that after the House took action on a measure, it came here. So the obvious question is, What happened to it? It has been a year. It must be here somewhere. Well, we know exactly where it is. It is in Senator McCONNELL's office. He is the Republican Leader of the U.S. Senate, and he has made a conscious decision that hundreds of bills just like this one will not even be considered on the floor of the Senate. It isn't that he doesn't have a majority; he does. But he doesn't want us to even debate or discuss these bills before the American people.

This U.S. Senate once enjoyed its reputation as the world's most deliberative body, which means we came here, debated, argued, and voted on things like amendments and bills like this one. Last year in the U.S. Senate, the calendar year 2019, we considered exactly 22 amendments in the entire year—22 amendments in 1 year in this Senate. Six of them were offered by Senator PAUL, who, with a gun to our heads, said: If you don't give me a vote on my amendment, you can't go home. All six of his amendments were defeated, but that just gives you an example of why there is so little activity and why this floor is so empty so many times.

In fact, this floor has become a museum piece where bystanders, wit-

nesses, and spectators can come in, sit in the Galleries, and look down on the desks that used to be occupied by Senators who debated and voted. We don't do that anymore. Instead, we consider one after the other after the other of judicial nominations. I am not going to get into that issue because it has been touched on already.

My contribution to this For the People Act goes to the heart of political campaigns. If you don't think American political campaigns are long enough, if you would like us to be on television a few more months each year, hang on tight because it is coming. If you don't think enough money is being spent on American political campaigns, hang on tight because more is coming. If you want to reach the point where we have no idea where most of the money is coming from that funds these campaigns, hang on. The Citizens United decision by the Supreme Court across the street has set the stage for that, and that is where we are headed in America today.

My proposal for fair elections now moves in exactly the opposite directions—shorter campaigns, smaller contributions, more confrontation between candidates over issues than to have this battle of television ads that goes on now.

My act would create a voluntary, small-donor, public financing system for Senate candidates who agree to raise only small-dollar contributions. I know it is a dream, but think about what it would do to change American politics. Here is how it would work: Qualified Senate candidates would receive grants based on their State's population, 6-to-1 matching grants for contributions they get of \$200 or less—smaller contributors—and vouchers for purchasing television advertising other than social media. Once candidates reach the maximum amount of matching funds they receive, they continue to raise an unlimited amount of contributions of \$200 or less—a \$200 cap on contributions. They can also raise money from small-donor political action committees, known as People PACs, which allow citizens to make their voices heard by aggregating just small contributions—no big hitters.

The fair elections public financing system would elevate the views and interests of a diverse group of Americans, rather than the traditional wealthy class, and we would pay for it without spending a dime in taxpayer dollars. Our system would be financed with assessments on wealthy bad actors and industry law breakers. In the 2018 midterm elections, the price of victory for a successful House congressional candidate averaged about \$2 million, and 35 Senate candidates who won in 2018 spent an average of \$15.7 million apiece.

If we don't rein in the cost and length of campaigns, shame on us. We have to reclaim the reputation of this great Congress and the U.S. Senate, and it starts with the way we finance our campaigns.

In addition to the Fair Elections Now Act, this bill has measures to increase access to the ballot box, to strengthen election security, to improve oversight in our campaign finances, and to remove corruption from office.

I think it is outrageous that we live in an America in which people are dreaming up ways to restrict and restrain people's right to vote. If there is anything fundamental to a democracy, it is the vote of those who are legally entitled in America. I have been in this business for a while. I started off by losing a few elections. I didn't enjoy a moment of that, but there was a notion that at least the American people had spoken in those elections, and I accepted the verdicts of those people. They have come back and given me a few chances since to be in public service.

Let's make sure the American people have the voice—the most important voice in this process—through their right to vote. Keep foreigners out of the process, and put Americans into them. Don't make it hard to vote. Make it easy for those who are legally entitled to vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I come to the floor to mark the 1-year anniversary of the House passage of H.R. 1, the For the People Act. I am honored to be here with my colleagues, and I am here to urge the Republicans to bring this legislation to the floor for a vote.

This bill has been languishing in the legislative graveyard for a year. I know because I have 13 provisions in this bill. This bill—the combined work of so many people in this Chamber, including of my friends Senator UDALL, Senator MERKLEY, and many others—would fundamentally improve our democracy by protecting voting rights, securing our election systems, and getting dark money out of our campaign system.

Why is it so important for us to act on this bill? Every one of the things we want to get done—finally addressing the climate crisis, immigration reform, improving people's healthcare, making healthcare more affordable—depend on there being a democracy that works so people can make sure their votes count.

At a time when the right to vote is under attack, when foreign adversaries are trying to exploit our divisions and interfere in our elections—something we are going to be briefed about this afternoon from intelligence agencies—and when an unprecedented amount of money from special interests is drowning out the voices of the American people, we need to take bold action to restore Americans' confidence in our political system. That is exactly what the For the People Act does.

As the ranking member of the Committee on Rules and Administration, I know this bill is important. I am frustrated that we have not had more

Rules Committee hearings about things like the oversight of the FEC. I am frustrated that, just today, a Republican Commissioner was put forth for a hearing, recommended by the White House, when there is a highly qualified Democratic candidate who would be the first person of color in history to serve on the Federal Election Commission who has been vetted and has cleared the White House. Yet we only saw the Republican candidate. This is why this bill is so important.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, which granted women the right to vote. As we celebrate, we are reminded that, throughout our country's history, the right to vote has been hard fought and hard won. Just 2 weeks ago, I had the honor of joining Congressman JOHN LEWIS—a true hero for voting rights—on the 55th annual Selma bridge crossing to commemorate the sacrifices made on Bloody Sunday.

When we reflect on the sacrifices that have been made for the right to vote, one thing is truly clear—that the fight is not over. There are people today who are working to take the right to vote away. Their work comes in many forms: voter ID laws, gerrymandered districts, purging people from voting rolls, and one that we just saw just last week on Super Tuesday—polling place closures that result in voters having to wait hours in line just to cast their ballots. Just last week in the State of Texas, some African-American voters waited more than 5 hours in line. When a reporter asked one group of voters how the group got through it, a man said: We thought they were making us wait on purpose, so we motivated each other to stay.

The policies that led to those long lines didn't happen by accident. Discrimination in voting is happening, as the Fourth Circuit noted in a North Carolina decision on gerrymandering—and these are the words of the judges—with “surgical precision.” Discrimination in voting is happening with surgical precision against the African-American community.

Our democracy is stronger when more people participate, and our policies are better when more people participate, so we should be making it easier, not harder, to vote. Every eligible American should be automatically registered to vote when one turns 18. That is a bill that I lead. If Target, which is my hometown company, can track a pair of shoes in Hawaii with a SKU number, if everyone gets a Social Security number, we should be able to make sure that people who are eligible to vote are automatically registered when they turn 18.

So as to end the practice of gerrymandering, we also need to reform how we draw district maps by having an independent commission in each State. Certainly, we also need to ban the purging of voting rolls. As my friend Stacey Abrams has said, if you don't go to church or the synagogue or the

mosque for a year or so, you don't lose your right to worship. If you don't go to a PTA meeting or any other kind of Rotary Club or anything for a few years, you don't lose your right to assemble under the U.S. Constitution, and if you have not voted in a few elections and show up when you have been registered but, somehow, they never sent you the notice and, because there is no same-day registration, you find out you cannot vote, even though you had been duly registered to vote, you should not lose your right to vote under the U.S. Constitution. That is exactly what is going on right now with voting purges.

I am proud to lead provisions in the important For the People Act that would accomplish the goals to end these discriminatory practices. Of course, we also have to make voting more secure, which is my last topic.

It has been 1,218 days since Russia attacked us in 2016, and we have yet to pass comprehensive election security legislation. The next major elections are just 240 days away, and primaries, as we know, are underway. We must take action now to secure our elections from foreign threats. That is why I have championed legislation to beef up our election systems, which was included in H.R. 1, by providing States with the resources to modernize our voting equipment—some of this has been passed here in this Chamber—but also to set standards for Federal elections, which is the key part—requirements like paper ballots and post-election audits. We still have States—entire States—that have no backup paper ballots.

I am not going to spend time going through all of those States, but let me tell you that the Russians know exactly which States those are that have no backup paper ballots. We just had some caucuses in this country, and people resorted to looking at those paper ballots. Imagine if we were hacked in a certain county or in a certain State and there were no backup paper ballots. What would that do to a Federal election?

These are the basics of a secure election system, but in 2020, as I noted, voters in eight States will now cast their ballots on machines that produce no paper trails. There are 16 States that still have no statewide audit requirements to confirm the results of an election, and a majority of States relies on voting systems that are at least 10 years old. That is wrong.

That is why Senator LANKFORD and I, as well as Senator WARNER, Senator HARRIS, Senator BURR, and many others, have been pushing the Senate to act, but we have been gut-punched because calls were made from the White House and calls were made from Senator MCCONNELL a year ago to stop the votes to get that bill through the committee to the Senate floor.

Making voting easier and more secure is only part of the solution. We also have to get dark money out of our

politics and increase transparency. Americans know this. They know there is way too much dark money in our politics. In poll, after poll, after poll, they overwhelmingly want to have more transparency. Campaign finance reform is a central part of H.R. 1 for a reason. If we don't put a check on the corrupting influence of money in politics, American voices will continue to be drowned out by special interests.

Think about the three things I have just proposed: making voting easier, securing our election systems, and getting Big Money out of our campaigns. These are not radical proposals. These are proposals on which nearly everyone in our country agrees.

I conclude by noting, in addition to marking the 1-year anniversary of the passage of H.R. 1 in the House, today is Harriet Tubman Day. Most people remember Harriet Tubman for her incredible work on the Underground Railroad, where she repeatedly risked her life for the freedom of others. I recently watched the movie "Harriet" and highly recommend it to my colleagues. Yet Harriet Tubman didn't stop her fight for freedom and equality after the Civil War ended. She took up the cause of women's suffrage and worked tirelessly until she was 90 years old in helping women get the right to vote. We celebrate her life today because she spent a lifetime bending the arc of our moral universe toward justice.

The best way we can honor her and the countless others who have risked their lives for our country and our democracy is to continue the work of improving our democracy so that it works better for the next generation. That is what the For the People Act is all about.

I urge my Republican colleagues—I implore them—a group of people who I know believes in freedom—to allow us to have this bill come up for a vote to ensure that people have the cherished freedom to vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to talk about this bill.

I thank my colleague Senator UDALL, of New Mexico, and my colleague Senator MERKLEY, of Oregon, for their extraordinary work.

I don't know if they have ever had the experience that I have often had or the Presiding Officer has had, but there are times, in my having spent a week here after having done absolutely nothing, when I am walking through the Denver International Airport, and I want to put a paper bag over my head because I am so embarrassed about the failure of this institution to live up to even the barest responsibilities that we have.

I mean, we can't even pass a basic infrastructure bill around this place while China is building 3,500 miles of fiber-optic cable to connect Latin

America with Africa and back to China to export the surveillance state from China. That is what China is doing there while we are doing nothing here. We have become the land of flickering lights, whereby the standard of success is whether we have kept the lights on for another 2 hours or another 4 hours.

What the American people need to understand is that this is the ideological end state of what the Freedom Caucus came to Washington to do. It has become the ideological end state of what MITCH MCCONNELL can do because, in the rubble of our institutions, they can achieve the objectives they want to achieve. They can put right-wing judges on the courts without our institutions working. They can come out here and cut taxes for rich people and claim it is a middle-class tax cut without our institutions working. Yet what we are unable to do without those institutions working is invest in our infrastructure, make sure that we have an education system in this country that is actually liberating people from their economic circumstances instead of reinforcing their economic circumstances, ensure that we are doing something on the climate and doing something on guns.

It has been more than 20 years since Columbine happened in Colorado. My State—the Western State, a Second Amendment State—passed background checks after Columbine. My three daughters grew up knowing they lived in a State that was actually trying to respond to what was going on in their schools—not true of the U.S. Congress.

The reason for much of this inaction is the Supreme Court's decision with regard to Citizens United. I will not belabor the point, for I know my colleague from Hawaii was kind to let me go ahead of her, but let me just repeat this: After Citizens United, 10 donors over the past decade have contributed \$1.2 billion to our policy. That has created a corruption of inaction in the U.S. Senate. It is not corruption that you see because it is a corruption of inaction. It is the bill that is not introduced. It is the committee hearing that is not held. It is the vote that is never taken for fear that, if you do that, some billionaire is going to drop \$30 million on your race and run a primary against you in your next election.

Do you want to know why we can have a Senate in the United States that votes on only 22 amendments in a year? That is the reason. Do you want to know why we have a Senate wherein 75 percent of the votes are personnel votes and 25 percent are actually on amendments? That is the reason. We have to overcome it, not for Democrats or Republicans but for the American people because this is their exercise in self-government. This is the way they make decisions.

I know these reforms can work because they have worked in Colorado with a bipartisan commission to end gerrymandering, mail-in voting, and automatic and same-day voting reg-

istration. The result is that we have the second highest voter participation rate in America. How can that not be good for our democracy?

So my hope is that at some point, when he hears the voices of the American people, MITCH MCCONNELL will relent and allow these bills to come to the floor.

He described this bill last year as a power grab—a power grab—and I will accept that if it is understood that it is a power grab by the American people, which is what it is—an effort to get money out of our politics and to put people back into our politics so we can start doing the work that the American people sent us here to do.

With that, I thank my colleague from Hawaii again for her indulgence.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I also want to thank Senators Udall and Merkley for their extraordinary work on the For the People Act.

We are confronting a crisis in our democracy. We have a President who repeatedly invites foreign intervention in our elections, engages in widespread corruption, attacks the news media as part of a broader assault on the truth, and uses false claims of voter fraud to legitimize voter suppression across the country.

These challenges to our democracy are not limited to the Trump administration, but this President has undoubtedly made things much, much worse. It is why I joined an overwhelming number of my Democratic colleagues of both Chambers of Congress in cosponsoring H.R. 1, the For the People Act.

This crucial piece of legislation is the most expansive and serious attempt to strengthen American democracy in decades. Among its many provisions, this bill would root out corruption by attacking the dark money in our politics. The door was opened in the Citizens United decision by the Supreme Court. This bill would also secure our elections from foreign interference and restore voter protections that Republicans have spent decades attacking for their own partisan political benefit.

Like many of my colleagues, I am particularly focused on combating the Republican Party's efforts to disenfranchise millions of minority voters. I could spend hours detailing the efforts throughout American history to make it as difficult as possible—or even impossible—for people of color to vote.

But today I want to focus on the impact of the Supreme Court's 2013 decision in Shelby County. In this 5-to-4 decision, Chief Justice Roberts and the Court's conservative Justices effectively gutted the core protections of the Voting Rights Act. They decided that States with long histories of discrimination no longer had to obtain Federal approval for voting changes under the Voting Rights Act.

As author Carol Anderson explained, Chief Justice Roberts has “[l]ong [been] an opponent of the Voting Rights Act,” and in Shelby County he used arguments that had been “carefully crafted” over “several decades” to eviscerate the Voting Rights Act.

Without the constraints of the Voting Rights Act, States with long histories of discrimination ramped up voter suppression, from racist voter ID laws to eliminating early voting, to purging voter rolls and closing polling places.

In the 6 years following the Shelby County decision, for example, States previously subjected to preclearance under the Voting Rights Act closed at least 1,688 polling sites. Texas alone closed 750 polling places.

The closures had their intended effect. A study at Harvard University found that minority voters are six times more likely than White voters to wait longer than an hour to vote. Longer waits impose greater costs for voting on minorities and deter them from voting in future elections. We saw the impact of these policies just last week on Super Tuesday, which saw inordinately long lines in minority precincts in Texas.

Mr. Hervis Rogers waited more than 6 hours to vote, but he was determined to make his voice heard. So when he got to his polling place at Texas Southern University, a historically Black college in Houston, he patiently waited in line until he could cast his vote at 1:30 in the morning.

Mr. Rogers’s experience last week speaks to one part of a broader problem. The Republican Party is so invested in voter suppression because they view it as an effective tool to win elections, and these efforts had devastating consequences for our country in the 2016 Presidential election—the first Presidential election held in 50 years that did not have the protections of the Voting Rights Act.

We saw plummeting minority turnout across the country, including in the key swing States of Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Carol Anderson observed that in 2016, 50,000 fewer people voted in 1—just 1—overwhelmingly African-American county in Wisconsin. Donald Trump, by comparison, won Wisconsin by only 27,000 votes.

Efforts to further suppress the minority vote in swing States continue to date. Last year, for example, a conservative interest group sued Wisconsin’s State Elections Commission to force a purge of 209,000 infrequent voters from the voter rolls. Although a lower State court granted the conservative group’s request, a Wisconsin appeals court put the voter purge on hold while the fight in court continues.

These ongoing voter suppression efforts serve as stark reminders of why we need to pass the For the People Act. This bill not only blocks common strategies Republicans have used to make it harder for minorities to vote,

but it also includes critical democracy reforms to make their votes count.

This legislation would also set strong national standards to protect voting access that reflect and improve upon steps that have already been taken by States like Hawaii. Last year, for example, Hawaii became the fourth State in the country to provide mail-in ballots to all voters. Our State also has same-day voter registration, preregistration for residents under the age of 18, and a 10-day early voting period.

While some States are stepping up to protect voting rights, Congress needs to take strong and decisive action to restore voting rights and end voter suppression across the country.

We also need to take an equally strong stand against Donald Trump’s efforts to pack our Federal courts with judges who have dedicated their careers to undermining the voting rights of minorities.

At the Supreme Court, where Donald Trump has appointed two Justices, there have been a number of cases attacking the voting rights of minority communities, and there are real concerns that the Roberts Court will continue to uphold these voter suppression efforts.

In the lower courts, Trump judges include Andrew Brasher, now an Eleventh Circuit judge, who argued in support of gutting the Voting Rights Act in the Shelby County case; and Kyle Duncan, now a Fifth Circuit judge, who defended North Carolina’s discriminatory voting law that the Fourth Circuit found—and I quote the Fourth Circuit—“target[ed] African Americans with almost surgical precision.” These are overt acts to suppress voting.

President Trump’s hostility to voting rights is so extreme. He is appointing anti-voting rights advocates even to courts that do not handle voting issues, such as Stephen Schwartz for the Court of Federal Claims and Stephen Vaden for the Court of International Trade. Both have no experience with these courts, but both have defended North Carolina’s discriminatory voting law.

The right to vote is one of our most sacred rights, and we must do all that we can to protect it for all Americans. That is why I will continue to fight back against Donald Trump’s court packing and fight for the passage of critical legislation like the For the People Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from OREGON.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I am pleased to be here with my colleagues to fight to restore the American Constitution. I am pleased to be here with Senator TOM UDALL, who has led the For the People Act, and my colleagues MAZIE HIRONO, MICHAEL BENNET, AMY KLOBUCHAR, and DICK DURBIN—all speaking up to say that we must defend the American Constitution.

At the root of that is our system of electing those who represent us, and that election system, America, is now deeply corrupted by gerrymandering, by extensive, persistent voter suppression, and by dark money. It affects everything that we should achieve for the people of the United States.

If we believe we need to end the price gouging of Americans on pharmaceutical drugs, we need to end this corruption and pass the For the People Act. If we believe that every child deserves a quality K-12 education and that our children should be able to go to college without a mountain of debt, we need to end this corruption and pass the For the People Act. If we believe that Americans should be living in homes and apartments, not sleeping on the streets, we need to end this corruption and pass the For the People Act. If we believe that we have a responsibility to pass on a habitable and livable planet, free of pollution, to our children and grandchildren, we need to end this corruption and pass the For the People Act.

This corruption—gerrymandering, voter suppression, dark money—is all about eviscerating the very soul of our Constitution—the “we the people” vision of our Constitution, that we would not be like European nations that had government by and for the powerful, but that here in America representatives of the people would be able to have government by and for the people.

It is Jefferson who said: The real test of whether we succeed is whether the laws reflect the will of the people. But instead, we see the laws in this Chamber being constructed solely, uniquely, and, unfortunately for the most powerful and wealthy among us rather than the people.

Gerrymandering, where voters should choose their politicians but, instead, politicians choose their voters—that is a deep and powerful corruption that has extensive impact on the Chamber that is just down the hall.

We have seen what happened in North Carolina, where 47 percent of the State’s popular vote in House races won 23 percent of the seats and, similarly, in Pennsylvania, in the election before last, and the Supreme Court threw up its hands and said: We can’t do anything about this, even though the Pennsylvania Supreme Court understood it is so important to fairness and equal representation and took it on and solved it.

This bill sets up independent commissions across the country so that the districts for representation are drawn fairly.

Then there is voter suppression and intimidation. If you believe in our Constitution and if you honor it, you believe in voter empowerment, not voter suppression.

We have seen a flood of suppression and intimidation since the Supreme Court took a hatchet to the Voting Rights Act in the Shelby County case—voter ID laws, purges of voter rolls,



moving polling locations, cutting back on the hours, cutting back on the staffing. We have seen it in North Dakota. We have seen it in Georgia. We have seen it in Ohio, and we have seen it in North Carolina. We have seen it in Iowa. We have seen it in New Hampshire, and we saw it in Texas last week.

There are strategies to keep the poor from voting, strategies to keep those Americans of minority communities from voting, strategies to keep American Native Indians from voting, and strategies to keep college students from voting. Talk about the intense and deliberate corruption of America. Voter suppression and intimidation is it.

But this bill lays it out—automatic voter registration, national vote-by-mail, prohibiting the purging of voting rolls, online registration to enable people to have a smooth, solid road to be able to participate, rather than roadblocks and land mines to prevent them from participating.

Then we have the dark money. These are the most powerful and richest Americans trying to drown out the voices of millions of Americans through unlimited dark and dirty money in our campaigns. Americans know the system is now rigged. They know it is now corrupted by this money. We have seen an explosion of this money since 2010 when the Citizens United decision came down, a 5-to-4 decision from the Supreme Court. It bloated to more than \$4.4 billion.

This bill takes that on. It shines a light on all the money so we know where it is coming from and where it is going, so it can't be hidden in a shell game from one level, to the next, to the next. It requires honest ads. It allows small-donor matching grants. This bill, for the people, says no to corruption and yes to the "we the people" Constitution of the United States of America.

If we want to act on the fundamentals for families on healthcare, on housing, on education, on infrastructure, and on living-wage jobs; if we want to take on the Equality Act so doors are no longer slammed for the LGBTQ community; if we are going to take on the carbon pollution that is destroying so much in American agriculture and our forests and our fishing, doing so much damage with fiercer storms; if we are going to take this on, we must pass the For the People Act.

This act has passed the House down the hall. It has come down here, and it has been buried by the Republican leadership in this Chamber in, I must say, one of the most deliberate acts of sabotage of the Constitution we have ever seen on the floor of this Senate, and that sabotage must end.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 39, H.R. 1; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid

upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Is there objection?

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I must admit I was sitting here, and I thought I was coming over for H.R. 1 from the House, which was attempted to be put on the floor—a bill that was supposedly designed to create ballot security—and I got here and found out that this is the bill that will right all wrongs. I had no idea that in one piece of legislation, so many things could happen.

I understand also it is a bill that stops the subversion of the Constitution. I actually always thought a principal purpose of our Constitution was to divide between the State and the Federal Government those things that could be better done by local government and those things that could be better done by State government. That certainly is not what I heard today.

I also thought that the reason for this bill supposedly from the House was a bill that would create a level of election security that I never thought the bill would create, but I haven't heard that.

I almost went down to ask as my friend was finishing up, am I really here for H.R. 1, or is this some other bill that does so much more than I ever could have imagined that H.R. 1 could do?

In March of 2019, the House did pass this bill. It gave unprecedented control to the Federal Government over the elections of the country. You take away—you moved as far as you possibly could, with this bill, the responsibility for running an election at a precinct in a jurisdiction.

At that time, the Senate requested that the bill be taken up, and it was objected to—by me, actually. In the intervening year, the bill hasn't changed. It appears to have gotten a lot better at what it might possibly be designed to do, which appears to be everything that anybody would ever want to deal with, but what it really does is it still represents a one-size-fits-all Federal power grab to take control of election administration away from the States and in most cases away from the community and in many cases away from a locally elected official whose—the very essence of the job they have been elected to do is to be sure that not only can people vote but that people have confidence in what happens on election day. That, in my view, would change dramatically if you move that responsibility from the people who have it now to some group here in Washington, DC, who would try to administer elections nationally.

I am confident that wouldn't happen. In fact, the security of our elections—since the impetus of this was supposed to be more secure elections when the House first said they were going to

pass a big election bill that ensures elections will be more secure, I think the thing that secures our elections the most is the diversity of the system. This bill would undermine the decentralization of the system. It would undermine the ability of local officials to be responsible.

I spent 20 years as either the election official in the biggest county in our State where one person had that responsibility or as the secretary of state, the chief election official. I have been advised by and I have given advice to and I have worked with local election officials who are incredibly motivated to see that what happens on election day is what voters want to have happen—the ability to cast their ballots with minimum obstacles and with maximum confidence that what happened on election day was what voters intended to do. I think I understand how hard those election officials work and everything they do to ensure that voters will be heard.

It is not just my opinion. President Obama in 2016 said that "there is no serious person out there who would suggest somehow that you could even rig America's elections, in part because they are so decentralized and the number of votes involved." I actually agree with that. I think that was right then, and I think that is right now.

But this bill tells States how they could run every aspect of their election. It takes away the authority of States to determine their own process in voter registration. It requires States—many States do this. If States do this and they think it works in their State, fine with me. But this would require online registration. It would require automatic voter registration. It would require same-day registration. If we were concerned about access to the voter rolls, none of those things would be things that from Washington, DC, we would believe we could require. It requires the criteria of how you process how a voter can be removed from the voter rolls. It tells States what kind of election equipment they must use. It tells States how their ballots have to be counted. It tells States how their ballots have to be audited. It even goes so far as to tell States what kind of paper their ballots have to be printed on.

That is exactly what happens when you decide you are going to make something better by making one big one-size-fits-all system. Nothing is too small for that system to decide they can do better than anybody locally could decide, even what paper the ballot is printed on.

This doesn't stop at that, though. It changes Federal campaign finance law. It includes politicizing the Federal Elections Commission by changing it from an evenly divided number to a partisan, five-member Commission where three members would always be of the opposite party from the other two. It creates a program for public financing of Federal elections, which

was just described as “grants to politicians”—the most ingenious description I have heard of giving tax money to politicians to run elections. It would be a grant to politicians.

This bill hasn't changed since last March, but a lot has changed since last March. The Intelligence Committee that I am a member of has released three volumes of its report on Russian interference in the 2016 election. Those three volumes include numerous recommendations to combat foreign election interference in our elections. The vast majority of those recommendations are not in this law. Many of those recommendations have been passed by the Senate and not passed by the House.

We are going to have a briefing in just about 50 minutes from the FBI, the Homeland Security people, and the people who are actually working to secure our elections so that every Senator can hear what is happening there. None of that is in this bill.

State and local officials have moved dramatically since 2016 to upgrade their systems. All but two States, I believe, now have largely moved to where they have an auditable paper trail, which I was always insisting upon as a State election official. States are moving in that direction. They are changing their own laws. Federal officials are giving them advice when they need it but not trying to take over.

This bill not only doesn't acknowledge what State and local officials have been doing, but it actually undermines what they have been doing by setting standards that the brandnew equipment might not fit—equipment that has a paper trail, equipment that States had just bought, equipment they bought that they think would do a better job but might not be in full compliance with this new law.

There certainly are things that the Federal Government can do to assist, particularly in securing local elections and giving advice to local election officials. H.R. 1 does not do most of those things. It doesn't meet the standard that it sets for itself. It doesn't address the actual challenges in elections. So, Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, my colleague has just demonstrated why this bill should be on the floor. He has given extensive conversation on a series of points that should be deliberated upon.

I say to my colleague from Missouri, isn't this what we should be doing as a body, putting issues on the floor of the Senate and debating them for the future of this country so that we can get, if you will, right to the facts rather than to have things obscured by the fact that the issue is not on the floor.

So I would encourage my colleague from Missouri to go back to his caucus and say: You know, I just gave a vigorous opposition to this bill, but I believe in the role of the Senate in delib-

erating the issues. So I think this bill should be put on the floor, and I think it should be open to amendments.

I can hear from what my colleague has stated that he probably thinks the bill should be shrunk and probably thinks it could also be expanded. Good. That is the point of having debate and amendments on the floor of the Senate.

So I would hope, in the spirit of your comments, you would be willing to actually stand up and debate this bill and advocate for your colleagues to debate this bill on the floor of the Senate, because once upon a time, this floor would have been full of Members arguing over key issues, enlightening each other, pointing out the flaws in their thinking, but now substantive policy bills don't arrive here on the floor because of an unconstitutional position—one that is not delineated in the Constitution—the majority leader has decided that nothing should be debated on this floor that he alone doesn't want considered.

Let's think about some of the points that were just raised. One point was that the Federal Government should have no role in elections; it should all be left to local officials. Didn't we have that debate in 1965 in the Voting Rights Act? Why did the Federal Government say that we should, in fact, have laws for the integrity of our elections? It was because there were all kinds of forms of voter intimidation and voter suppression, keeping the people of the United States, the citizens of the United States, from fully participating in their democratic Republic. It is the Constitution that laid out this role for the Federal Government, saying Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations regarding elections. So it is the Constitution that envisioned that if States failed to protect the integrity of our elections, then we should act right here, right now.

My colleague said he didn't like the idea that the bill says what type of paper to use. Well, that's certainly something that can be worked out. But shouldn't we have paper ballots everywhere?

My colleague said local officials are doing a great job. Then why were people in minority districts waiting 7 hours to vote, when people in many other districts—more affluent districts—were waiting 7 minutes to vote? That is discrimination, straight and simple. Shouldn't we debate eliminating that discrimination here on the floor of the Senate?

This is about the integrity of our elections. This is about the vision of our Constitution. This is about not letting the wealthy and powerful control what happens in our United States of America.

If we do not address this corruption of this Senate and of the voting institutions, then we, in fact, will fail to fulfill our responsibility under the Constitution of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### AUSTRALIAN WILDFIRES

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to honor the alliance we have between America and Australia. Specifically, I want to pay tribute to the partnership we have with regard to firefighting. America's century-old friendship with Australia has safeguarded two great nations.

July of 2018 marked the 100th anniversary of our historic victory in the pivotal Battle of Hamel during World War I. The Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty came together to cement this military alliance. Since that treaty was signed in 1951, we have always supported each other in times of crisis. It is this enduring spirit of mutual concern and cooperation and commitment that we celebrate today.

Senator BEN CARDIN of Maryland and I have put together a bipartisan resolution paying tribute to our firefighting alliance.

In recent years, the United States and Australia have suffered some of the hottest, driest weather on record. As a result, we have seen longer, fiercer wildfire seasons. For over 15 years, the two nations have come together to battle some of the most damaging and deadly fires. In 2018, more than 100 Australians helped the United States combat wildfires ravaging the West Coast.

For our part, U.S. agencies have been sending American firefighters to help the people of Australia. These agencies include the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Most recently, 362 firefighters helped battle this season's brutal Australian brush fires. These brush fires burned over 30 million acres before the last fires were put out just this month.

Tragically, three former American servicemembers died in a plane crash fighting the wildfires in Australia. One of these heroes, Ian McBeth of Montana, was actually a member of the Wyoming National Guard. Also killed were firefighters Paul Hudson of Arizona and Rick DeMorgan of Florida.

This resolution honors their ultimate sacrifice. It also recognizes the sacrifices of all of the courageous American and Australian firefighters.

I especially want to thank the 15 firefighters from my home State of Wyoming who assisted Australia: Travis Braten, Anna Cressler, Peter Freire, Kyle Miller, Chris Rankin, Eldred Slagowski, Traci Weaver, Timothy Haas, Richard Howe, Frank Keeler, Robert McConchie, Shane McCormick, Heath Morgan, Rance Neighbors, and Jonathan Ziegler.

I ask unanimous consent that the complete list of all of the names of those U.S.-Australia brush fire firefighters be printed in the RECORD.

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

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

## FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

## US AUSTRALIA BUSH FIRES

Charles Russell, Peter Butteri, Bradford James Reed, Dylan Howard Brooks, Kyle Cowan, Raymond Anthony Crowe, John Craig Fremont, Evan Elliot Karp, Adam Kohley, Theodore Plumlee, Karen Irene Scholl, Brian A Lopez, Sean W Snyder, Lori E. Hisek, Anthony Edward Acheson, Jonathan F Catron, Sean C Cox, Nathaniel Curtis Dierking, Melanie N Dolan, Jared B Gilmore.

Bill Kuche, Bethany Dawn Kurtz, Clyde England, Benjamin Stuart Evans, John M Garrett, Cody Goff, Ryan Hagenah, Koreena L Haynes, Jake T Rocke, Jamie Rogers, Brady Schultz, Greg Smith, Eugene H Thul, RobRoy Williams, Corey Wood, Mark Empey, Leander Real Bird, Angel Acosta, Kristen M Allison, Victor Almanza.

Matthew A Aoki, Pablo Arriaga, Shane W Bender, Salvador W Cody Blanco, Fred Brewster, Danielle T Cardenas, John Casey, Ernest Cecon, Armando Ceja, Hector Cerna, Brad W Corbin, William Richard Crews, Daniel R Diaz, Leonard Dimaculangan, Timothy Dunfee, Catherine B Eurbin, Isaac Flattley, Jason French, Santos Gonzalez, Brian P Good.

Justine Gude, Keegan Guillory, Joshua H Haddock, Charles Hixon, Patrick Howard, Janes, Brian Janes, Sean D Johnny, Paul Johnson, Joseph P Jones, Kyle Jones, Kenneth C Kempter, Ken H Kumpe, Alex E Malson, Tony Martinez, Josh Mathiesen, Jack Lincoln Matteson, Alex McBath, Jonathan Merager, Vicente Moreno.

Richard Noggles, Jackie Ortega, Adam D Park, Jorge L Perez, Adam Ramirez, Richard Reposa III, Gabriel J Romero, Mark S Smith, David Ernest Soldavini, Sean Stalie, Teresa M Stelman, Greg Stenmo, Johnny Summers, Matthew R Tarango, Joshua Thomas, Kevin Tkoch, Sergio Jose Toscano, Harold D Updike, Eduardo Valle, Eric Verdries.

Jason Withrow, John Worsley, Kurt M Yearout, Grant J Gifford, Tim Klukas, Jason W Loomis, Robin Wills, Rick L Young, Kyle Landon Bonham, David Carrera, Jeremy Scott McMahan, Elizabeth A Schenk, Jeremy Stocks, Jeremy Strait, Nate Gogna, Jeffrey Michael Bade, Thomas Barter, Michael Bryson, Andre Camacho, Dennis Fogel, Tyler Hoest.

Jay L Karle, William F King, Scott McCreary, Tracy Milakovic, Joshua Alan Morris, Jonathon Michael Richert, Kelly Rudger, Isaac Shinkle, David Smallman, Michelle S Smith, Kelly J Stover, Eric Zanotto, Richard Barrett, Shawn M Phillips, Todd D Ruzicka, John Weil, Richard I Sterry, Patrick B Blair, Geoffrey C Harrison, Owen Johnson, Matthew M Ringer.

Russell Stark, Tyler S Webb, Robert Dodgen, Jason Pertruska, Jason Steinmetz, Steve G Parrish, John G Ramsay, Greg Titus, Michael W Dueitt, John Allen Mason, Greg Funderburk, Benjamin Hobbs, Carroll Stewart, Cole Moore, Benjamin Covault, Tony L DeMasters, Mary F Fields, Robert Harper, Sean D Johnson, Albert L Linch.

James Greg Loper, Douglas Marolf, Monica Christine Morrison, Gary Brian Munson, Ricky Jackson, Robert MacDonald, Stuart Rodeffer, Destry Wayne Scheel, Kyle Lee Smith, Roger L Staats, Brian J Watts, Joel A Welch, Nicholas D Yturri, Alex Abols, Elden Alexander, Daniel A Betts, Ray M Bilbao, Lester Brown, Kristian Lee Bruington, Chris Belliston, Todd Jinkins.

Michael Evan Johnson, Mark L Kelley, Kenneth Bochniak, Farron Leslie Kunkel, Jennifer Dawn Myslivy, Page Nolin, John C Noneman, Stephen F Price, Ivan Kendrick Smith, Clay Stephens, Thaddeus Labrum,

Kafka, Joseph P Kafka, Joel Kerley, Michelle Moore, Charles Jason Barnes, Kimberley S Owczarzak, Brian Stearns, Michael Richard Crook, Ann M Niesen, Martin Cassellius.

Reggie E Bray, Allen C Briggs, Robbie Gerald Hollsingworth, Jared Bohrman, Michael D Burow, Jeannette M Dreadfulwater, James C Flint, Michael D Goicoechea, Gump, Robert Gump, Jermyn, Robin Jermyn, Justin Kaber, James L King, Morganne M Lehr, Chris J Loraas, Dennis Arthur Morotn, Nate Ochs, Brent H Olson, Brett Pargman, William Phillips, Kathy A Pipkin, Cameron L Razor, Scott Schrenk, Julie N Shea, Charles Showers, Trent Daniel Sohr, Mike N Granger, Christopher M Barth, Leroy Steven Evans, Richard Hayner, Richard C Lang JR, David C Lee, Julie Polutnik, Mike J Williams, Bonnie Strawser, Scott Beacham, Cody Wienk, Rick Beal, Gilbert Calkins, Marcus Cornwell, Jonathan Henry Crane, Terrance Gallegos.

Barry Edward Lee, Jennifer Martynuik, Chris Niccoli, Ezra C Engleson, Matthew James Peterson, Justin Cutler, Brian C Holmes, Ian McQueary, Jacob Keogh, Juan Islas, Kevin Kelly, Joseph L Miller, Dylan Rader, Timothy P Roide, Eric T Tilden, Tyson A Albrecht, Jason Amis, Lorri Ann Benefield, Josh Diacetis, Clayton A Farnsworth, Nathan D Goodrich, Jason Matthew Green.

Edward Hiatt, Mark Hocken, Michael C Ingman, Brett Edward Johnson, Ruth M Johnson, Bart Cory Kicklighter, Laura B Livingstotn, Eric A Miller, James Norman Osborne, Todd M Pederson, Alexander R Plascencia, Alex Robertson, Norman Arno Sealing III, Sandra M Sperry, Cameron M Stinchfield, Samuel D Tacchini, Kip Forrest Turner, Michael S Graham, Jeremiah Maghan.

Jada Altman, Scott Barnes, Kenneth R Boles, Tavis N Fenske, Justin Fenton, Josh Fulton, Brenda Hallmark, Natalie L Simrell, Chanel Sitz, Benjamin Thayer, John Toelle, John Szulc, Tomas K Liogys, Paul E Church-ill, Joshua J Ball, Kurt Bassestt, Kevin Lloyd Merrill, Eric K Allen, Lee Justin Dueker, Janan Hay Sharp, Tommy M Barnes, Michael Allan Davis, Jason M McDaniel.

Reynaldo Navarro, Jr, Brian Burbridge, James Holbrook Chadwick, Linda Milbury Chappe, Chris Marson, Clint C Coates, Dustin Blair, Renee F Flanagan, Audrey Huse, Kim J Martin, Jonathan Peel, Robert Lopez, Megan Saylor, Matthew W Way, Tracy Swenson, Michael J Doherty, Jason Kirks, Jeffrey Wilson.

Dameon Julander, Pila Malolo, Matthew Pippin, Jason Porter, Jeremy Seng, Tommy Braun, J Bradley Washa, Tyler Van Ormer, Robert F Allen, Steven John Brady JR, Kyle Cannon, Britt J Davis, Mike Daivs, Marge Hutchinson, Lindsey Kupfer, Patrick McGabe, Daniel E Pickard, John E Wirth, Scott Ebel, Jeff Dean Dimke.

Steven Rudolph Miller, Brendan P Neylon, Travis Braten, Anna Cressler, Peter L Freire, Kyle Miller, Chris Andrew Rankin, Eldred Jay Slagowski, Traci E Weaver, Timothy J Haas, Richard Howe, Frank Keeler, Robert McConchie, Shane McCormick, Heath Morgan, Rance Neighbors, Jonathan E Ziegler.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, the fact is that America's firefighters put their lives on the line every day to keep people safe. They do it here at home, and they do it when they go abroad.

This resolution applauds the brave men and women who responded to the Australian people in their hour of need.

It also promotes the sharing of critical resources, research, and best practices. This will help us prevent and suppress future fires.

Be assured that the American-Australian firefighting alliance will continue to protect us in the time of crisis. Our bipartisan resolution celebrates this enduring partnership.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

## HONORING IAN MCBETH

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming for his comments. I come here today to express some very similar ones.

I come here today at a sad time—a sad time for Americans and especially a sad time for Montanans. You see, at the end of January, we lost three great Americans who paid the ultimate price for risking their lives for our allies down under. Those three great Americans are Flight Engineer Rick DeMorgan, First Officer Paul Clyde Hudson, and Captain Ian McBeth, who is a Montanan. They all lost their lives when their plane went down fighting a devastating bush fire in Australia.

Captain McBeth lived in Great Falls, MT. He was a dedicated pilot and servicemember. He was a member of both the Montana and the Wyoming Air National Guards and he completed several combat deployments, including tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Captain McBeth was one of the best pilots Montana had to offer. It was as if he was born to fly C-130s. But even more, he was born to be a caring father, husband, brother, and son to the incredible family he has left behind. At 44 years of age, he was taken from them far too young.

Captain McBeth was devoted to his family, leaving behind his wife, Bowdie; his kids, Abigail, Calvin, and Ella; and his parents and siblings, whose hearts have to be aching right now.

My wife Sharla and I are keeping them in our prayers and in our hearts through this trying time.

Captain McBeth heard the call to serve this country and did so honorably, taking that call to duty even further to help the folks in need on the other side of the world to fight wildfires.

Now, Montanans are no stranger to the risks that come from fighting wildfires, but that doesn't make it any easier when we lose one of our own. Captain McBeth and so many other Montanans who bravely run into danger when others run out—these are our heroes, plain and simple. We owe a debt of gratitude to Captain McBeth that can never be repaid. Montana has lost one of its finest, and he will be missed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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. MCSALLY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

HONORING PAUL HUDSON

Ms. MCSALLY. Madam President, last week, I cosponsored a bipartisan resolution honoring the three American firefighters who lost their lives fighting Australia's bush fires this year, including First Officer Paul Hudson, from Buckeye, AZ. Each of these men gave the ultimate sacrifice in service to others.

Paul dedicated his life to protecting others, first as a marine and then as a firefighter. He served in the Marine Corps for 20 years, including as a C-130 pilot, before retiring as a lieutenant colonel. Paul graduated from the Naval Academy in 1999 and later went on to earn a master's degree in business administration and information technology management from the Naval Postgraduate School.

When aid was needed in Australia to combat the devastating wildfires, Paul jumped into action and put his life on the line to help others. He was only 42 years old when he was killed in a plane crash while fighting to extinguish these awful fires. My heart and my prayers, and Arizona's heart and Arizona's prayers, go out to his wife, Noreen, and her loss. Arizona will not forget Paul's immense selflessness and his sacrifice.

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

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

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

##### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 587.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of James P. Danly, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 30, 2023.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of James P. Danly, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 30, 2023.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Crapo, Tim Scott, Chuck Grassley, David Perdue, Lamar Alexander, John Barrasso, Tom Cotton, Thom Tillis, James M. Inhofe, Shelley Moore Capito, Ron Johnson, Mike Rounds, Richard Burr, James Lankford, Jerry Moran, John Thune.

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

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

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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

#### RECESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in recess until 5 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 4:02 p.m., recessed until 5 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. CASSIDY).

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION—Continued

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RELATING TO "BORROWER DEFENSE INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY"—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in just a few moments, we are going to be considering the motion to proceed to the borrower CRA, and I would like to say a few words, understanding that the Senators are expecting this motion to come up in about 5 minutes.

This is a joint resolution that was passed on a bipartisan basis in the House of Representatives to overturn the borrower defense rule that has been promulgated by Department of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos. I am pleased to be the Senate's sponsor.

Here is what it comes down to—hundreds of thousands of Federal student loan borrowers having been defrauded by their schools. They went to some of these for-profit schools that have gone out of business, but many schools defrauded these students over the years.

We in Congress established what was known as the borrower defense. We said, if you borrow money from the Federal Government and go to colleges that we acknowledge as being accred-

ited and they defraud you, lie to you, misrepresent to you what your education is going to cost or what it is going to give you, then, you don't have to be saddled with the student debt for the rest of your life because of their lies, because of their fraud. You have a chance to go to the Department of Education and plead your case that you were defrauded, and you should at least be relieved of some, if not all, of your student loan debt. That is what it is all about.

There are 230,000 student borrowers who are waiting for the Department of Education, under Betsy DeVos, to do something. The Department has not done anything except to come up with a new rule that says, at this point, it is going to be harder for these students to prove fraud. It isn't enough that the States and other units of government have found fraud by these schools. These students are supposed to be their own lawyers and their own investigators and prove the fraud and how it affected them personally.

Is it reasonable for a young student who has been defrauded and is carrying student debt to have that responsibility? Secretary DeVos thinks yes. I think no. That is what this vote is all about.

Who agrees with my position on this issue? Most of the advocates for students do. In addition, the veterans organizations across America, led by the American Legion, are supporting our effort now under this Congressional Review Act to do away with the new rule by the Secretary of the Department of Education. They say it is unfair to veterans—it is—and unfair to student borrowers to hold them to this standard.

The American Legion's national commander, Bill Oxford, called the rule, which we are going to get a chance to vote on after the debate, "fundamentally rigged against defrauded borrowers." He is speaking on behalf of veterans. He could be speaking on behalf of young men and women across America who have been misled by these schools over and over again. The Bipartisan Policy Center Action, the NAACP, Third Way, 20 State attorneys general, and a host of others have joined me in urging the Senate to overturn this unfair rule.

The Senate has a chance today to show the country that we can come together and do the right thing for students and veterans. How many times have we given speeches about how much we care about veterans? Here is a chance to vote with the veterans, especially those who have been defrauded out of their GI bill of rights and have ended up with additional debt.

Secondly, how many times have people told us these student debts are too much, are ruining kids' lives, and to give them a chance? I am not for forgiving all loans to all students, but these students have been defrauded. They should have an opportunity to start life again and not be burdened with the debt that is going to make life impossible in their futures.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me. Regardless of what you think of the 2016 rule, we can certainly do better than what Secretary DeVos has come up with.

I have been advised that we are not quite ready for my request of the Chair. So I will say a couple of more words on the subject. I moved it along quickly, but I didn't have to.

Under the new Betsy DeVos rule, it turns out that, of the 100 percent of students who have been defrauded and are asking for relief, the estimate is that 3 percent will be successful but that 97 percent of these students will not have the opportunity to get this relief.

One of my colleagues whom I respect very much came to the floor here and said: If your car is a lemon, you don't sue the bank; you sue the dealer. A college can be a lemon just like a car can be. In his scenario, the school is the dealer, and the Department of Education is the bank. The case that he is making for a student who has been defrauded by a school is that one has been sold a lemon of an education and that we should go after the offending school.

Doesn't that sound right—that, if a school has defrauded you, you would go after it?

It turns out that the rule that Secretary DeVos has promulgated ties the hands of a student who is going after the school. It requires forced, mandatory arbitration. So you can't take it to court. It eliminates class actions so that students from the same school, like the Corinthian Colleges, which went bankrupt, can't even come together as a class. No, you have to lawyer up individually. You have to get ready to fight in some room that has been set aside in which the for-profit school and the Department of Education are going to argue against you.

Is that what we want to say to these students who have been through bad college experiences and want to get on with their lives, who found out that these credit hours from these for-profit colleges didn't transfer anywhere, and who found out the courses that were supposed to lead to jobs didn't lead to jobs?

These students were misled by these schools, and these schools are notorious for it. The question is this: Are we going to stand up for the students, many of whom are veterans, or are we going to stand up for the schools that have been affected by this?

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I rise in support of S.J.Res. 56, a resolution of congressional disapproval for the Department of Education's, Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability rule.

It is inconceivable to me that the Federal Department of Education would choose to protect the profits of predatory corporations instead of the students they ripped off, but sadly, that is exactly what Secretary DeVos's borrower defense regulation does. It is now up to Congress to step in and re-

verse the harm that her Department is seeking to do.

Four years ago, the Obama administration took action when it became clear that a number of for-profit colleges were defrauding students, leaving them on the hook for massive loans without an education or a job. The borrower defense rule established under President Obama made sure that students who had been hurt by these schools could access debt relief and get a chance at restarting their education. Unfortunately, Secretary DeVos chose to gut that regulation, making it nearly impossible for defrauded students to get any kind of debt relief from the loans they took out to attend colleges that were later found to be bad actors. To make matters worse, Secretary DeVos also rescinded existing protections and ended forgiveness pathways that were included in the 2016 borrower defense rule. Secretary DeVos took what was a fair and transparent process and rigged the deck against students.

Because of the new barriers to debt relief established by Secretary DeVos's new borrower defense rule, only an estimated 3 percent of loans associated with school misconduct will be discharged. The DeVos rule eliminates the ability for borrowers to file for relief in groups and requires individuals to meet an unreasonably high standard of evidence that the school intended to mislead them. In addition, the rule only gives borrowers 3 years from the time they leave school to file a claim. In a large number of previous cases, it has taken many years to gather evidence of and establish fraud. Finally, the DeVos rule prohibits borrowers from appealing the decision on their claim, even if new evidence of a school's misconduct comes to light.

This new rule might be good for corporate profits, but it will have a cruel impact on many vulnerable people who can afford it the least. I hear often from Connecticut residents who have been crippled by massive debt accrued while attending what turned out to be a valueless institution and who desperately need access to debt relief through a borrowers defense claim.

I have heard from a number of students in Connecticut who joined a lawsuit in the bankruptcy case of ITT Technical Institute after its closure left 40,000 students in limbo. Students described falsified job placement rates, lack of career connection with industries associated with their degree programs, unqualified teachers, and inaccurate information about their loan terms.

Meanwhile, the Department holds those with claims in financial limbo as they wait years for a decision. Natarsha Morales, who attended Briarwood College in Southington, CT, filed a claim on \$39,000 in outstanding Federal student loans. Natarsha filed this claim nearly 4 years ago and has yet to receive a decision. During this time, Briarwood College, which later

became Lincoln College, closed permanently after a history of defrauding students like her. As the Department neither grants nor denies her request, the interest on her loans continues to grow. As a result, Natarsha has struggled to plan for her financial future. She has been unable to buy a home and unable to enroll in another educational program.

These students were just trying to do the right thing; they made sacrifices to try to get an education, better themselves, and get on a path to a better-paying career. Tragically, we now know that the degrees these students obtained—or sought to obtain—were worthless, and they were taken advantage of by predatory institutions that cared only about taking as much money as possible. The least we can do for these students is to give them a chance at loan forgiveness.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of S.J.Res. 56 and repeal the DeVos Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability rule that turns its back on borrowers and reduces the culpability of risky institutions.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand there is a discharge petition at the desk for S.J. Res. 56 that has been signed by at least 30 Senators, which will cause the joint resolution to be discharged under the Congressional Review Act; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes, it is.

MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 439, S.J. Res. 56, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to "Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability".

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

Mr. DURBIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH).

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

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

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 69 Leg.]

YEAS—55

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

NAYS—41

Alexander	Fischer	Risch
Barrasso	Graham	Roberts
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hoeben	Rounds
Boozman	Inhofe	Rubio
Braun	Johnson	Sasse
Burr	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lee	Shelby
Cotton	Loeffler	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	Moran	Toomey
Daines	Paul	Wicker
Enzi	Perdue	

NOT VOTING—4

Cruz	Sanders
Hyde-Smith	Warren

The motion was agreed to.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RELATING TO BORROWER DEFENSE INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Calendar No. 439, S.J. Res. 56, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to "Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACCURACY AND TECHNOLOGICAL AVAILABILITY ACT

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I rise in support of S. 1822, the Broadband DATA Act, and in a moment I will make a unanimous consent request with regard to that legislation.

This bill will ensure that the FCC has the most accurate broadband coverage maps in the world today to deploy 5G networks. As you know, we were in a race to win that race globally, and I think we can still do it.

In December, the Senate unanimously passed this measure, S. 1822, but because the House passed a slightly

amended version last week, we need to act again to get this bill across the finish line.

We have a digital divide in this country which threatens to leave rural America behind. We have done a lot to address that divide. However, an estimated 20 million Americans still lack access to broadband—Americans like those in Arizona or Mississippi or other States across our heartland. Every year, the FCC spends billions of dollars to promote deployment of broadband across the United States. S. 1822 will result in highly detailed and accurate maps so that the FCC can direct support to areas most in need.

This legislation represents extensive negotiation and work on a bipartisan and bicameral basis, for which I congratulate this Senate. My hat is off to our colleagues in the other body and thanks to all the staff who have helped on both sides of the aisle.

Madam President, I ask the Chair lay before the Senate the message to accompany S. 1822.

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

*Resolved*, That the bill from the Senate (S. 1822) entitled "An act to require the Federal Communications Commission to issue rules relating to the collection of data with respect to the availability of broadband services and for other purposes.", do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I move to concur in the House amendment, and I ask unanimous consent that the motion be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RELATING TO BORROWER DEFENSE INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I want to thank my colleague, Senator DURBIN, for leading efforts this week to undo Betsy DeVos's harmful rollback protections for millions of Americans with student loans ripped off by for-profit colleges. This is an example where the Senate stood up to the President, stood up to the billionaire Secretary of Education whose mission in that job is to privatize public education and turn profits for her and her friends and her allies. This bipartisan Senate stood up to her and stood up to the President, stood up to the majority leader, and did the right thing.

We have seen these for-profit colleges in Ohio. Schools like Corinthian and

ITT, which make big promises with fake—and this time the word "fake" is accurate—they make big promises with fake or deceptive job placement rates. They spend millions on marketing, and they trick students into taking out huge loans, only to close up shop and leave them with meaningless degrees or, worse yet, just credits but always mountains of debt.

These are people trying to get an education to improve their job prospects to build a better life for themselves and their families. Too often these predatory schools target Black students, Latino students, immigrants, low-income students, and first-generation college students. Many of them are veterans returning from serving our country and looking to start a new career.

These for-profit colleges are willing to exploit people who have taken out loans to go there who are veterans. Sometimes they go to school. They served their country and then they go to school, and these for-profit colleges are willing to take advantage of them. These for-profit schools are all about lining the pockets of their CEOs.

We need to stand with the defrauded student borrowers and hold these for-profit schools accountable. Of course, we have learned not to hold our breath when it comes to the Trump administration holding anyone accountable—at least anyone rich accountable. Instead of figuring out how to provide relief for students, Secretary Betsy DeVos went to work figuring out how to let the schools that scammed them off the hook.

Three hundred thousand people had submitted borrower defense claims as of last December. More than 200,000 of those requests are still pending. More than 7,700 Ohioans—7,700 people in my State—are waiting for relief.

In 2016, the Obama administration announced a rule to help these students get their loans canceled, but the DeVos Department of Education—the Trump Department of Education—dragged its feet on processing borrower defense claims. They rewrote the rule to make it damn near impossible for defrauded students to get the relief they were promised. They are throwing up hurdle after hurdle: narrow time limits, making students gather all kinds of unnecessary paperwork, and banning students from appealing a decision.

DeVos's rule opens up the doors for schools to once again use mandatory arbitration. I am not a lawyer, but I know from seeing this done to far too many of my constituents. Its legal fine print that for-profit schools sneak into their enrollment agreements deny students their day in court. Students don't know they are part of these agreements. They are, and they lose their day in court.

I hear from Ohioans all the time who have been scammed by these schools.

Tasha Berkhalter came to Washington last month to bring attention to



this important issue. She is an Army veteran. She served our country with honor. She is a mother of four. She returned home. She wanted to do forensics with the FBI, so she enrolled in ITT's criminal justice program. She didn't think of it as a for-profit school. She didn't know she was about to get scammed.

She had served our country. She wanted to serve our country. She went to this for-profit school. ITT told her that her GI benefits would cover the full tuition and that they would help her get a job after graduation. But when she began to suspect the program wasn't the high-quality education that it claimed and tried to transfer, she found out that no other schools—no other legitimate schools—would accept her ITT credits. The supposedly high-tech school was using outdated books.

Faced with a choice of continuing at ITT or starting completely over, she finished her degree. She ended up \$100,000 in debt. Remember, ITT told her the GI bill would cover everything—well, except for \$100,000. She ended up \$100,000 in debt with a degree that, unfortunately, employers didn't take seriously.

Those are the people whom Secretary DeVos and those are the people whom President Trump, with his own Trump University, want to take over our higher education system.

Now she has lost her shot at using the GI benefit she earned, and she is drowning in debt.

Ms. Berkhalter and other student veterans defrauded by shady schools deserve better than the treatment they are getting under Betsy DeVos. Not only is Betsy DeVos refusing to help, her new borrower defense rule will let other for-profit colleges continue to run the same scams on other students and student veterans.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is supposed to crack down on these schools and on loan-servicing companies that handle people's student loans. That is why we created the CFPB—to look out for people like Ms. Berkhalter. But under President Trump, under Betsy DeVos, they refuse to let the CFPB look into loan services that are scamming students.

I asked the CFPB Director today about this. We have been asking her for a year to take this over and make it work. She continues to yield to her billionaire friend in the Cabinet, Secretary DeVos, who is a billionaire friend of the billionaire President and has no interest in making him accountable. President Trump's CFPB Director is rolling over, refusing to do her job protecting the tens of millions of Americans with student loans.

It comes back always to whose side you are on. Are you going to stand with student veterans, or are you going to stand with these for-profit CEOs, these CEOs of for-profit schools who are making literally millions of dollars a year? Are you going to fight for defrauded Americans saddled with stu-

dent loans or the shady schools ripping them off? It is pretty clear with whom President Trump and Betsy DeVos are standing. Over and over and over, President Trump and his administration betray the people he promised to fight for.

I am glad my colleagues stood up today. It was a bipartisan victory. It said to President Trump and Betsy DeVos and Majority Leader MCCONNELL that that kind of fraud, that kind of exploitation of our veterans and our students who are defrauded by these for-profit colleges is something we will no longer accept.

#### REMEMBERING NATHANIEL JONES

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I rise to honor a leader in the fight for justice, a great Ohioan whom we lost last month, Judge Nathaniel Jones.

At a ceremony dedicating the Federal courthouse in honor of Judge Jones in 2003, former Congressman Louis Stokes said that the courthouse served as a testament to the outstanding public service by "a local who made good." Judge Jones certainly was that.

Born in Youngstown in 1926, he served a country that did not yet recognize his full legal equality. He served his country in World War II. He went on to become a respected lawyer. He went on first to be a journalist who worked for the Youngstown and Pittsburgh News. He worked for the Youngstown newspaper. He covered Jackie Robinson when Jackie Robinson played in AAA and became a friend of his. He went on to become a respected lawyer, a Federal judge, and an international civil and human rights advocate. He was a local who made good, but more importantly, he was a man who did good. He committed his life to the pursuit of justice and equality. We are all the better for it.

He led efforts to end employment discrimination as the Executive Director of the Fair Employment Practices Commission. He was the first African-American U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio. He served as Assistant General Counsel for President Johnson's Kerner Commission. That Commission issued a landmark report warning that racism and poverty were the root causes of violence in our Nation's cities during the 1960s.

As general counsel for the NAACP, Judge Jones directed efforts to fight discrimination faced by African-American soldiers and worked to desegregate public schools in the North, stepping in personally to argue several cases.

Nominated by President Carter, he was confirmed in 1979 to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals—one of only 39 African Americans to ever serve on the Federal Circuit. As a judge, he felt it was his duty to be an instrument of change in a system that too often denied justice to people of color. In many of the cases that came before the court, he so often sided with those taking on powerful interests and fighting for

their rights—something we see far too little of in this body and in this government.

As South Africa began to move beyond the dark days of apartheid and chart a new future of inclusion and equality, Judge Jones was called to help draft the country's new Constitution.

In Cincinnati, which he called home for some 45 years, the footprints of his good work can be seen across the city. Some of my favorite times were sitting in Judge Jones's office and listening to him tell about his days as a reporter knowing Jackie Robinson, talking about his days at the NAACP, and talking about his belief in justice and his passion for fair play.

He was one of the early supporters of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. He mentored numerous young lawyers who served as his law clerks. He offered his assistance to local leaders seeking to address the lingering stigma of racism still far too present in our society. Judge Jones was a brilliant legal thinker. He was a dogged advocate for civil rights.

Judge Jones was a wonderful husband and father. I am privileged to know well Stephanie, his daughter, who worked in the House of Representatives some years ago. He was a good friend, and he was a mentor to so many. He was also a relentless optimist who never—never—ceased to believe in the promise of our great country.

The legacy of Judge Nathaniel Jones will live on through his far-reaching work for justice and through the many, many lives he touched.

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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, my colleague from Ohio just spoke about Nathaniel R. Jones, who was a circuit judge with the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati and had a distinguished career as a judge but a long, distinguished career as a true champion of civil rights going back to the 1960s and was also general counsel of the NAACP when landmark cases were decided. I also happened to have had the privilege of getting to know him over the years and considered him a dear friend.

We have a resolution that passed the Senate last month with regard to Judge Jones, and I am pleased to join my colleague SHERROD BROWN today in paying tribute again to Nathaniel R. Jones. That resolution is now in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and therefore the agent for all of us to be able to understand the importance of the work he did and for future generations to understand the importance of the march to freedom that he represented.

## GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT

Madam President, I am also here on the floor today to highlight the introduction of landmark new legislation called the Great American Outdoors Act. It is to ensure that some of our country's greatest resources and our greatest treasures, including our national parks, are taken care of for generations to come.

I am proud to help lead the introduction of this bill along with my colleagues Senator GARDNER, Senator MANCHIN, Senator DAINES, Senator WARNER, Senator ALEXANDER, and Senator KING. I also want to thank President Trump and his administration, first for President Trump's support of the Restore Our Parks Act, which is part of this legislation, over the past few years but also for their support of this broader legislation, the Great American Outdoors Act.

In the spirit of President Teddy Roosevelt over 100 years ago, Federal land management agencies like the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and others have worked to designate and preserve some of the most beautiful and historic parks of our country. Those lands, of course, include those we all know of as our national parks—Yosemite, Yellowstone, some of the great ones, Glacier—but also more modest sites like the boyhood home of President Taft in my home State of Ohio.

In all, the National Park Service and its system include more than 84 million acres of parks and historical sites that now attract 330 million visitors annually. Actually, that is a record. More people are going to the parks than ever. That is great. The concern is, when they get to the parks, sometimes the parks aren't working for them because of the huge infrastructure needs and the deferred maintenance problems.

We have eight of these national parks in Ohio, including Cuyahoga Valley National Park, which is our largest single park and actually is the 13th most visited national park in the country. It is a great park. Whether it is for biking, hiking, fishing, or kayaking, I am one of those 2.7 million visitors to Cuyahoga Valley National Park and Ohio's national parks every year. I want to be sure these public lands are preserved so more Americans can visit these incredible sites into the future.

Going back to my days as the Director of the Office of Management and Budget in the George W. Bush administration—going back about a dozen years—I have taken the lead on figuring out ways to help protect our national park sites throughout the country. At that time, we proposed—in the Bush administration—a centennial bill. We were coming up on the 100th anniversary of our national parks, and the notion was to get more public-private partnerships involved in the parks. President Bush and his Secretary of the Interior at the time were very sup-

portive of this effort, as was the Office of Management and Budget.

After my time in the Bush administration, I was a member of the Centennial Commission on the National Parks, and here in the Senate, I am the author of what is called the National Park Service Centennial Act, which was signed into law in 2016, on the 100th anniversary, to establish the Centennial Challenge Fund for the national parks.

By the way, that Centennial Challenge Fund has done pretty well—\$113 million has been appropriated, but it has been leveraged by an additional \$147 million from the private sector. So it has worked exactly as we intended it to—in fact, even better; it has been even more than a one-to-one match—the notion being, you put a challenge fund out there and say, if you care about the parks, the Federal taxpayer will put in some money, and you hope the private sector will also match it, and it has been more than matched.

We also established the centennial endowment at what is called the National Parks Foundation. This endowment is intended to fund projects to address things like deferred maintenance at our parks. Separately, that centennial endowment has now \$31.5 million in it.

We know there is more work to do, though, to protect our national lands to ensure they are going to be there to enjoy for the future. The Great American Outdoors Act will help us in moving forward with this mission through two main initiatives.

First, it will permanently fund what is known as the Land and Water Conservation Fund through a provision offered by Senators GARDNER and MANCHIN—a \$900 million initiative. The Land and Water Conservation Fund provides resources to State and local governments, as well as the Federal Government, to acquire land and water so that they can be protected. Often this is your city park back home, so sometimes it is neighborhood land. Sometimes it is land that connects to a national park or a national forest. Sometimes there is a checkerboard pattern of private ownership and public ownership, and it helps to connect those together to preserve some of our existing public lands.

In any case, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has been successful over the years. Since its creation in 1965, over \$330 million in LCF funding has gone to protecting land in Ohio, as an example, and ensuring recreational access to those lands.

The second part of this legislation is that, along with the LWCF, the Great American Outdoors Act includes our bipartisan Parks Act. It is called the Restore Our Parks Act. I authored this along with Senator WARNER, Senator KING, and Senator ALEXANDER.

As I said, the parks and public lands are some of our greatest treasures in this country. The problem is that, over time, we have allowed this mainte-

nance backlog to build up, meaning that a lot of the buildings and infrastructure, the roads, the bridges, and the water systems are deteriorating to the point that a lot of them are completely unusable.

Again, it is great that a lot of folks are going to the parks now, but when they get there, sometimes the trail is closed, the bathroom is not working, and the visitor center has a leak in the roof and can't be used. So it is time for us to put some funding into these deferred maintenance expenses. Some would call them, perhaps, capital expenses.

Why has this happened? Well, because although every year we appropriate funding for the parks, the funding is for the operations of the park—for the nature programs, for the rangers, for just the day-to-day activities—not for these infrastructure or capital expenses or what we call deferred maintenance.

I have seen this firsthand in Ohio, where there is more than a \$100 million backlog in long-delayed maintenance projects at our eight national park sites. Last fall I was at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. I go there frequently. It is a great park, but it badly needs more than \$15 million in repairs—renovations for shelters, for parking lots, for a bridge that is dangerous to cross, for railroad tracks. There is a scenic railroad that runs through the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, but the railroad track is in such bad repair that it is dangerous—or will be soon—to go on that scenic railway. Trails have been falling apart because of erosion, and they don't have enough money to do it.

Let me give an example. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park has about an \$11 million budget every year. So the taxpayers of America come to us here in Congress and say: Let's fund our parks. We fund the parks for daily operations, and \$11 million goes to Cuyahoga Valley National Park—again, the 13th most visited national park. It is a great park. There are a lot of visitors. It is sort of a suburban and in some places almost an urban park as well as a rural park. It is exactly what we need more of. A lot of kids access it—a lot of schoolkids. Well, the deferred maintenance is over \$50 million, so at \$11 million a year, how do you pay for that deferred maintenance? That has been the challenge.

Elsewhere in the State, I have toured Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, which is on the shores of Lake Erie. This is at Put-in-Bay, so if you know Put-in-Bay—a famous spot for recreation, but the historic part of it is Perry's Victory Monument. It was established under those who fought in the Battle of Lake Erie in the War of 1812, as well as to celebrate the long-lasting peace between Britain, Canada, and the United States. So it is an important historical marker.

There I saw some of the \$48 million in long-delayed maintenance needs at the

site, which includes millions in needed repairs to fix a concrete seawall that is literally crumbling. The high-water level of Lake Erie has been part of the problem. Part of the problem is that it is just old, and it is crumbling. There are sinkholes around it. You are not allowed to go near the seawall or therefore near the lake. The visitor center needs significant updates and needs to be made ADA accessible. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that they make it accessible, and they don't have the funds to do that.

In that case, there is a \$48 million price tag to do the maintenance repairs, and their annual budget is minuscule because it is a small park. It is a monument with a small visitor center. Yet they have this huge expense.

I have also been to the Hopewell Culture National Historical Park in Chillicothe to see millennia-old burial mounds from the original Native Americans who were there and earthworks from the area's pre-Columbian inhabitants. Again, I also saw there about \$3.5 million in unmet maintenance needs, including needed repairs to the exterior of the visitor center and its trail system.

Parks have a lot of issues that over time have built up, and that is a huge problem for us. In a way, it is kind of like being a homeowner: If you allow the deferred maintenance to build up, if you don't take care of the roof, what happens? Your drywall gets wet, and you have mold in the drywall, and then the floor starts to buckle. But for being able to fix that roof, you have all kinds of other problems. That is what has been happening in our parks. The costs just keep mounting. The total backlog at the national parks is now believed to be over \$12 billion.

By the way, we require the parks to keep these lists: What are your most urgent needs, and what are the broad needs you have in terms of deferred maintenance? So we have good data on this one, and we know it is over \$12 billion.

It is a compounding problem. If you don't fix it, it gets worse and worse and worse, which only increases the cost to taxpayers. The longer we wait to address these maintenance needs—not fixing the hole in the roof creates a lot of other costs for taxpayers.

I like this legislation because essentially it is saying: These are debts unpaid. This is work that should have been done previously. So let's find a funding source that is appropriate to that. I think the funding source we found is the right one, which is the on- and offshore oil and gas revenues. Instead of going into the U.S. Government, some of these are going to be diverted to our national parks to pay for expenses that have been there for years that we should have paid for earlier but just don't have the method and the ability to pay for those kinds of capital expenses or those kinds of deferred maintenance projects in the annual budget.

So that is why we need to address this problem, and it is a problem that is growing. We don't want it to get worse. Again, it comes at a time when visitation is pretty good. From 2006 to 2017, annual visitation increased by more than 58 million people. Again, over 330 million people visited the parks last year. That has also put, I believe, more pressure on the parks and on this deferred maintenance we talked about.

The challenges of keeping up with it have stretched our land management agencies thin—not just the parks but the Forest Service, our fish and wildlife refuges, our other Department of Interior land. We have more issues now because so many of these lands have been using bandaids to kind of get through it, and that doesn't deal with the underlying issues, so the costs are mounting.

We initially introduced this common-sense solution to just deal with the parks, which, again, have reached over \$12 billion. Since then, I am pleased to say we have worked with our colleagues on the other side of the Capitol, who included these other lands, and also with the administration to include funding for other land management agencies that also have deferred maintenance issues—again, the Forest Service, the BLM over at the Department of Interior, the fish and wildlife refuges, and some of the Bureau of Indian Affairs lands.

To address this, the legislation before us creates what is called the Legacy Restoration Fund, which will provide \$1.9 billion per year for 5 years—it is a 5-year program—from unobligated on- and offshore energy revenue. So these are royalties from that energy, which is actually increasing as we do more exploration. So it is a total over 5 years—\$1.9 billion a year—of \$9.5 billion to be divided across the National Park Service, which gets the bulk of it, but also the Forest Service, wildlife refuge, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Indian Affairs.

It addresses only the priority needs because that is not enough to take care of all the needs. But the way the parks have analyzed this, they have priority needs of about \$6.5 billion, as an example, out of the \$12 billion, and all of those needs can be met with this funding. It is not all that is needed. We know we will have to go back at this again. But it is a very important bill—to do this for these 5 years to ensure that we can indeed have these treasures continue to be places where visitors can come from around the world, from around the country, from the Cleveland city schools right next to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and enjoy the majesty of our public lands.

I want to thank my colleagues again—Senators GARDNER, MANCHIN, and DAINES—for their support in helping to put this final package together. I want to thank our Restore Our Parks Act colleagues who have been at this a long time—4 or 5 years—Senator WAR-

NER, myself, and also Senator ALEXANDER and Senator KING.

Finally, I would like to once again thank President Trump for his strong support of the Restore Our Parks Act over the past few years and now of this new product that has come together. He understands the need to protect the natural beauty of our public lands. I spoke to him about it today.

To me, the Great American Outdoors Act is the next step in carrying out Teddy Roosevelt's legacy, Teddy Roosevelt's mission of protecting the environment for future generations.

I look forward to the ability to debate this on the floor of the U.S. Senate week after next and to then pass it with a strong bipartisan vote and send it to the President for his signature to ensure that this landmark legislation, this historic legislation, can be enacted into law.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

#### NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I rise this evening to discuss the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, which is oftentimes referred to as the "Magna Carta" of environmental laws. When I think about our Nation's most illustrious documents, I am reminded of the true expression of America and its aspirations. I am reminded of our Declaration of Independence and its embrace of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

I am also reminded of our Constitution. Delaware is known as the First State because we were the first State to ratify the Constitution, December 7, 1787—one week before anybody else. Our Constitution is the most replicated and enduring Constitution in the history of the world. It is not entirely unlike our more recent expressions of America's values and guiding principles, like the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, or NEPA. NEPA has served as one of our bedrock environmental laws for a half century now.

According to its six pages of statute, NEPA's purpose includes "efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man."

NEPA enshrines democracy by giving the American people a voice to help decide the fate of Federal decisions. For 50 years, NEPA has sought to ensure environmental protection, public health, and the notion that the American people have a say in Federal decision making.

Like our Constitution, NEPA is one of our Nation's most replicated laws. The same principles of democracy and citizen participation that are enshrined in our Constitution are also enshrined in NEPA. We have made changes to our Constitution over the years, but those changes were made rarely and with great forethought.

However, just 60 days ago, the Trump administration proposed a rule that

would fundamentally change the NEPA regulation for the first time in its 50-year history.

Earlier this month, I testified at the Council on Environmental Quality's public hearing in Washington, DC. There, I stated that unlike the Ten Commandments, the NEPA regulations are not written in stone. I understand that.

In 1978, there was broad consensus to finalize the NEPA regulations. If we had that same kind of broad consensus today to update certain NEPA provisions, this would be another story. After all, I have said oftentimes that if something isn't perfect, let's make it better. But there is a reason that NEPA is one of the most imitated environmental laws on this planet—it has had a lot of success.

Any changes to the implementing regulations of this bedrock law—let alone such substantial changes proposed by the Council on Environment Quality to NEPA regulations—require careful thought, meticulous deliberations, and bipartisanship. Consequential changes should be made rarely and with great forethought.

Speaking of bipartisanship, one of our nominees before the Environment and Public Works last year, nominated for a senior position in the Department of Interior, said, in these words: Bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions. That is what he said. He is a Republican, from Wyoming. He said: Bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions.

NEPA was signed into law 50 years ago by a Republican President, Richard Nixon. NEPA was passed in this body by a bipartisan majority. NEPA was passed in the House by a bipartisan majority. The reason why it is still alive and well and functioning, protecting our environment, is because it is a bipartisan solution, and it has helped make it a lasting solution.

Any changes—any changes to the implementing regulations of this bedrock law, let alone the kind of changes sought by CEQ, require a lot more careful thought, deliberation, and bipartisanship.

CEQ simply has not aimed to address the needs of all the stakeholders. Witness the universal opposition of the environmental community, NEPA's most consistent constituency. Council on Environmental Quality has touted this proposal—their proposal now—as a way to “modernize” NEPA. However, the proposal is instead an anachronism, taking us back to a time when construction bulldozed and disconnected communities, before NEPA was enacted in 1970.

This proposal casts aside any consideration of frontline communities, as well as the severe environmental consequences that come with eliminating the requirement to consider cumulative environmental impacts and indirect effects.

Taking away that requirement is akin to creating a new NEPA mandate that would exclude the impact to air

quality—or water quality—from a proposed action. Simply put, it makes no sense.

Not only is removing these requirements a bad idea for public health and for our environment, but doing so will end up costing taxpayers more when projects aren't built to be resilient and, as a result, taxpayer investments are quite literally washed away by the next big storm or flood.

What is more, this proposal gives the fox the keys to the henhouse by allowing companies to write their own environmental impact statements. Think about that—by allowing companies to write their own environmental impact statements. That is a little bit like offering students self-graded, take-home exams. This proposal also creates loopholes to avoid environmental review and public input, which is especially harmful to environmental justice communities that are often the targets of industrial investments and projects.

I take no joy in saying this, but the proposal before us is one that is, sadly, myopic and ideologically driven. I have repeatedly called on CEQ to withdraw this proposal, and I do so again today.

Along with the policy, I must also mention CEQ's refusal to open this notice to proposed rulemaking to greater public involvement that is commensurate with its gravity and scope.

In rebuttal to repeated concerns from more than 160 Members of Congress, and literally hundreds—hundreds—of stakeholder organizations, CEQ stated that it is “engaging in extensive public outreach, including through requests for public comments, two hearings and other outreach”—two hearings in the whole country.

Just last week, with only three full business days prior to the close of the comment period, CEQ finally told 166 other Members of Congress and me that it would refuse to extend the public comment period, thus providing the public as little opportunity as possible to have their voices heard.

Both CEQ's reply and its public statements make clear that CEQ believes it somehow deserves extra credit for allowing the public to participate in this rulemaking. Public involvement means not only an opportunity to comment, it means taking those comments seriously by CEQ.

Let me be clear. Neither this CEQ nor any Council on Environmental Quality gets extra credit for the mere act of requesting public comments on America's bedrock environmental law.

CEQ certainly does not deserve extra credit for allowing only 60 days to review and comment on this massive environmental protection rollback. CEQ also does not get extra credit for only two hearings in the entire country—two hearings—to receive public comment.

At these hearings, the public needed a ticket and only got 3 minutes to speak. Think about that: 3 minutes for a law that has been around for a half century that is a basic bedrock envi-

ronmental law, 3 minutes; constraining comments to a couple of minutes; the idea of requiring tickets, as if it is some kind of prize to participate in something that should be a democratic norm; and the idea of CEQ failing to engage a single speaker in Denver or Washington, DC. Think about that: not engaging even one speaker in the two places where the public actually had the opportunity to comment. Not one. That doesn't constitute an open process, not where I come from. I think it probably doesn't for most other folks as well. It doesn't come close. What we have here is a clear sign that CEQ is limiting the involvement of the public and wants the clock to expire before the public can find out what is actually in the massive rewrite. That is what it is.

To say I am disappointed with CEQ's response is an understatement. NEPA is a 50-year-old law, but Americans have only been given 60 days to defend it.

I will go back to what I said before. No law is written in stone. The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of our country are not written in stone. Everything we do, I know we can do better. But the way CEQ has approached this task, this undertaking, is not just disappointing, I think it is shameful.

NEPA reminds us that our government is one that is of the people, for the people, and by the people. But this proposal and this process bear—what I just described—little resemblance to those words of Abraham Lincoln. Sadly, they make a mockery of them.

Let me be clear. I will continue to fight to defend NEPA and the democratic tools it avails to the American people.

I yield the floor to my friend from Oklahoma.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

EMBRACE HOPE

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I come to the floor today to unashamedly brag on the people of Southwest Oklahoma. It is a pretty remarkable group of folks. In the community around Lawton, OK, and surrounding communities, there are people who serve their neighbors every day. There is a remarkable group of churches and nonprofits, ministries, Federal workers, State, city, and county staff who are there and do a pretty amazing job of taking care of their neighbors.

This weekend is above and beyond. This weekend, Southwest Oklahomans organized what they call Southwest Oklahoma Embrace Hope—so 1 day, on Saturday, where the whole community will be having neighbors serving neighbors to see what they can do to help each other.

Serving your neighbor is not about how much money you have or a title you hold or a certain house you live in. Taking care of your neighbor is just basic honoring each other and finding a way to love your neighbor. The vision

behind the Embrace Hope event is about stepping up and saying as individuals that we can do more if we do it together.

The Embrace Hope community event in Lawton will offer Oklahomans an opportunity to access a lot of free services and some basic help. There are partners from all over the State of Oklahoma who have donated their time, their services, their finances to help those in need all over Southwest Oklahoma—all in one place, all at one time. If someone needs housing—shelter, information, or a referral, food—there will be folks there who can help them.

There will be agencies there to talk about long-term needs and people needing short-term needs. If someone needs a job, there will be folks there who will show them opportunities for hiring. If someone needs to get their resume together so they can get a job, there will be folks there who can take a picture so they can use it with their resume. In fact, if folks need a suit to wear to an interview, there will be folks there to help them get a suit so they are able to prepare themselves for a job.

There will be health services there. You can schedule an appointment with a local health center, and there will also be ways to get dental services, optometry, pregnancy resources, or even a breast exam, if that is needed.

There will be folks there who can give them a haircut if they need a haircut and haven't been able to get access to that.

There will be folks there who are mental health professionals and counselors so they can interact with folks who may struggle with substance abuse or dealing with the stress of life. There will be folks there who can help them with legal assistance. These are communities coming together; ministries, churches, organizations, and government agencies are all coming to one place at one time to help.

There are a lot of needs in the area. In fact, in Oklahoma, according to DHS statistics just from this last year, we had 78,000-plus households that needed winter heating assistance in our State. More than 378,000 Oklahomans receive food benefits, like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. These are Federal resources and Federal programs.

As Members of Congress, we work together to help in whatever way we can to help those in greatest need to be lifted out of poverty and to be able to walk through some of their low points in life. But a government check or a check-in with a Federal entity is no substitute for a neighbor helping a neighbor. When you are at your low point of life, a check is helpful to get you through a hard time, but you need a person; you need a mentor; you need a friend; you need a neighbor.

The Embrace Hope event is all about that. It is neighbors helping each other to be able to walk through this process, but it is also about opportunities for

people who live in Southwest Oklahoma. It is not just to help someone one day, but also to understand that we could do this throughout the course of the year because there are lots of folks who say: I want to be able to help.

They just don't know where to go to be able to help their neighbors. They might help the folks who are around them; they might help people in a small group at their church; they might have family members they help, but they say that they want to be able to do more.

The Embrace Hope event allows volunteers by the hundreds who have signed up to serve their neighbor one day, but it also allows them to take a test drive with a bunch of other ministries and nonprofits in the area and say: What do you do that I can volunteer one day to help people, but maybe I can plug in and help you at other times?

It allows those nonprofits and ministries to reach out to a whole pool of people, who maybe are not involved all the time, to say: If you enjoyed helping your neighbor that day, why don't you come work with us the rest of the year?

It is a way for them to meet each other. Quite frankly, it is a way for us to build a stronger State, a stronger community, and stronger connections with our neighbors so that we don't default by saying "They get help from the government, so that is probably all they need," when we know in our heart it is not. They need help from somebody local. They need a friend, and they need somebody who can look them in the face and say: How can we help? That is Embrace Hope.

There have been hundreds of people who have volunteered already, and as they are preparing for this Saturday, it will probably be a cold and wet day, which is a perfect day to help people in need.

As we get together on this Saturday with all the volunteers and all the folks, there will be one person who will be in the background whom the whole event will circle around, but a lot of folks will not know it. Her name is Brenda Spencer-Ragland. She is the lead event coordinator for Embrace Hope. I can't even imagine how many hundreds of hours she has put in behind the scenes to be able to bring this to reality. Her title is event coordinator, but that title doesn't remotely do justice for the work she has done to bring Embrace Hope to reality.

She is one of those incredible individuals who everyone wishes lived around them, but Southwest Oklahoma actually has her. She has a servant's heart and a servant's attitude. It is who she is, quite frankly, more than just what she does.

Brenda served our Nation as a civilian with the U.S. Army for 32 years before assuming her current role. She was Director of the Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Program at Fort Sill in Lawton. Her title was a

fancy way of saying that she took care of military families in whatever way she possibly could, and she did it well. She loved serving those who serve us. On her retirement, she grieved because she loved serving those folks at the post.

Now, after dealing with morale at Fort Sill and after serving also as the Housing Director at Fort Sill, she has found a new way to serve—Embrace Hope. She has built around that same mission. She came to Oklahoma City, and she saw an event called Love OKC, which was similar to this. She brought a whole group of volunteers to come take a look at what was happening in Oklahoma City and the remarkable Love OKC event that has happened for 7 years in a row. She took that vision back to Southwest Oklahoma and created Embrace Hope. Meeting after meeting, donor after donor, long night after long night of organizing—it is about to happen.

Brenda, for all of the folks in Lawton who don't know you, they should be because, if they did, they would give you a warm hug and a very grateful thank-you for blessing so many people. Thank you for answering the call to serve your friends and neighbors and stepping up when you saw a need and tirelessly giving back to Southwest Oklahoma and the community that you love. It is an honor to call you a friend and a neighbor. I look forward to serving alongside you this weekend in Embrace Hope, doing whatever you need me to do to help you as we love our neighbors together.

God bless you. I look forward to seeing you there, Brenda. I love getting a chance to be able to brag about what is happening in the great Southwest Oklahoma.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

---

#### MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

---

#### RECOGNIZING THE ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE FIRE AND RESCUE SQUAD

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I want to take a moment to recognize the brave and selfless individuals from the St. Michael's College Fire and Rescue Squad, based in Colchester, VT. These young men and women respond to emergencies on a moment's notice to help those in need—all while balancing the demands of their full college course load. St. Michael's College Fire and Rescue helps bring a greater degree of safety to residents in Chittenden County, and we are thankful for their efforts. Today, I would like

to commemorate their 50 years of service.

St. Michael's Fire and Rescue Squad was founded in late 1969, after a local student died while waiting for emergency medical services to arrive. The community recognized that in order to prevent further tragedies of this nature, greater resources must be dedicated to emergency responders. Students rose to this challenge, and with the help of Donald "Pappy" Sutton, the former dean of students, they formed the squad. Despite starting out with only minimal equipment, this remarkable group now serves 385 square miles of Chittenden County, spanning their reach into surrounding towns and along 26 miles of Interstate 89. The territory covered far exceeds what we might expect from a group of college volunteers, but their capacity to serve only goes to show just how dedicated the St. Michael's Fire and Rescue team truly is.

Perhaps one of the most impressive aspects of this team is the fact that they are all between the ages of 18 and 22. The maturity and grace displayed by these young individuals while fulfilling their duties is nothing short of inspiring. These are people who, for some, have just left home for the first time and yet are successfully responding to crisis situations which would tax even the most experienced of us. These responders will sometimes be the first on the scene for a car crash, overdose, fire or medical emergency, and a split-second decision could make the difference between a life saved and a life lost. And we should not forget: these responders are all students managing their college classes in addition to volunteering. Emergencies give no credence to a student's sleep schedule; sometimes these students will get woken up in the late hours of the night or early hours of the morning to put out a fire, despite having class the following morning. Those who receive credit for their volunteer work are on call for 24 hours a week, taking turns sleeping in the designated volunteer bunks.

The work done by the St. Michael's Fire and Rescue team is not always glamorous, but it has kept the community remarkably safer. On average, the squad responds to more than 3,000 calls each year—some just false alarms, others far more severe in nature. But what has remained consistent is the relief that these volunteers have offered to local emergency responders and the peace of mind they have bestowed upon our residents. By offering support to our hard-working first responders, they inevitably ensure that more Vermonters get the help they need in the nick of time. In the process, they have inspired other college campuses around the Nation to form their own volunteer response teams, who can then help their own communities in times of need.

This is the type of bravery and selflessness that we are proud to see exem-

plified in our young citizens, and I am honored to have them recognized today.

#### RECOGNIZING ELMORE MOUNTAIN BREAD

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I want to take a moment to recognize a Vermont gem, Elmore Mountain Bread, a small business founded by a wife and husband team. Blair Marvin is a native Vermonter, who met her husband, Andrew Heyn, in Seattle, where she attended culinary school and worked. Blair brought Andrew to Vermont, where after working in several local restaurants, they took over a small bakery. Their work has been recognized locally, regionally, and nationally, in publications including *Kids VT*, *Yankee Magazine* and over the airwaves on National Public Radio. An article by Amelia Nierenberg in the February 18, 2020, edition of the *New York Times* focuses on Blair and Andrew's development of soft, sliced organic loaves, inspired by Blair's effort to provide healthier bread to their son Phineas's classmates at a local one-room schoolhouse. Small businesses like Elmore Mountain Bread are the cornerstone of our local economies, are fixtures in our communities, and are at the very heart of the American dream. In recognition of Blair and Andrew's efforts, I ask that the article "The Whole-Grain Grail: A Sandwich Bread With Mass Appeal," be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

[From the *New York Times*, Feb. 18, 2020]

#### THE WHOLE-GRAIN GRAIL: A SANDWICH BREAD WITH MASS APPEAL

(By Amelia Nierenberg)

ELMORE, VT.—When Blair Marvin started making and selling bread 15 years ago, she promised herself three things: She would never preslice it. She would never bake it in a pan. And she would certainly never sell it in plastic.

But three years ago, as she was helping out in the one-room schoolhouse where her son, Phineas, attended first grade, she realized she had a problem. At lunch, his friends weren't eating sandwiches made from the stone-ground, organic loaves she and her husband baked at Elmore Mountain Bread, and sold in local supermarkets. Sure, the students had Vermont-churned cheese from Vermont-raised cows. But their bread often came from a national bread company, made from white flour or laced with preservatives.

"All of these preconceived notions and standards I set for myself," said Ms. Marvin, 39. "None of it mattered. If Phineas's peers weren't eating our bread, then we were doing something wrong."

So she broke her vow. Using mostly whole-wheat flour, stone-ground in a mill made by New American Stone Mills, a company owned by her husband, Andrew Heyn, she developed a new loaf—soft, sliced and sealed in plastic.

"Everybody should have access to healthy food," she said. "We're trying to make something that is recognizable to the general population. It's a way of getting real bread into people's diets." Ms. Marvin and Mr. Heyn are

part of a collective of about 40 bakers, millers, teachers and wheat-breeders who work with the Bread Lab, a famed research center affiliated with Washington State University that has long focused on developing wheat varieties specific to regions of the country. Since last April, using guidelines established by the lab, the collective has pursued a common goal: making a whole-grain loaf that's familiar-looking and affordable enough to appeal to a mass audience.

The Bread Lab calls it "the approachable loaf," but each bakery in the Bread Lab Collective makes a slightly different version, informed by local tastes and local grains. Elmore Mountain Bread calls its bread the Vermont Redeemer, after a type of local wheat. Zingerman's Bakehouse, in Ann Arbor, Mich., calls its loaf State St. Wheat. King Arthur Flour, an employee-owned company in Norwich, Vt., christened its version Just Bread and published a recipe for home bakers on its website. It sells 350 of the loaves a week and donates others to a food pantry, said Karen Colberg, a chief executive at King Arthur Flour.

Whatever the name, the approachable loaf is made in 20 states, from Kalispell, Mont., to New Haven, Conn., as well as in England, Canada and Australia. For each loaf sold, 10 cents goes back to the Bread Lab to help fund grain research.

The loaf is something of a Trojan horse, a way to sneak healthy ingredients onto the taste buds of a younger generation. Its disguise as a standard-issue sandwich bread might be just the guerrilla tactic needed to get regional whole grains integrated into the developed world's diet.

"If it's crusty, you're not going to get soccer moms saying, 'Hey, we need to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches out of this,'" said Anthony Ambeliotis, a member of the collective who sells a version of the approachable loaf for \$4.50 at Mediterra Bakehouse, his family bakery outside Pittsburgh.

Despite a growing interest in baking bread and declining consumption of white bread, most loaves sold in America are still less than ideal in nutrients and fiber. Even the whole-grain breads that have reached a national market sometimes contain chemical preservatives or additives, like flavor enhancers or sugars.

"Why is it that 'affordable' has to be this hyper-centralized, hyper-processed product?" said Stephen Jones, the director of the Bread Lab, standing in its flour-covered research kitchen in Burlington, Wash., about 70 miles north of Seattle.

Since he founded the lab in 2011, Dr. Jones has tried to reinvent bread by promoting regional grain, breeding wheat varieties that taste good, like heirloom strains, but have a strong yield, like most modern hybrids. At the Grain Gathering conference, an annual meeting he hosts at the lab, enthusiasts and members of the collective come together to discuss how to incorporate the lab's research into craft baking.

"Once, if you said, 'I want to put my bread in a plastic bag and I want it sliced,' people would be like: 'I think you're at the wrong conference,'" said Louie Prager, an owner of Prager Brothers Artisan Breads in San Diego, which sold 4,800 approachable loaves last year, at \$5 apiece. "But now, it's fine to make a bread that works better for more people."

In summer 2018, Dr. Jones laid out his new vision. Like Ms. Marvin, he recognized that the collective needed to pivot and work with, rather than against, an American palate shaped by generations of white-bread sandwiches. To build the base formula for the new bread, he turned to Jeff Yankellow, a baker and the western region sales manager for King Arthur Flour.



"It's not the bricks of whole wheat bread that you think of from the hippie days," Mr. Yankellow said. "We're making really good stuff."

The Bread Lab has set three strict parameters for the approachable loaf: More than 60 percent of the flour must be whole wheat; it can't have more than seven ingredients, all of which have to be real food, not chemical additives; and it can't cost more than \$6.

"It's local, and I know the people who make it," said Elaina Lefevre, 27, who regularly buys Ms. Marvin's loaf for her young daughter at the Hannaford supermarket in Morrisville, Vt. "Five ingredients or less on a label is what I aim for."

Bread is among the simplest and most mundane things humans eat. It's in our prayers: Give us this day our daily bread. It's in our wallets: our bread and butter.

But bread has also been a catalyst for change. In 1789, the high price of bread brought angry protesters to the streets of Paris. In 2011, it did again, in Cairo's Tahrir Square.

"There's nothing more revolutionary than bread," Dr. Jones said. "But there's also nothing more mundane or pedestrian than bread. It's who we are."

Dr. Jones often works in an apron branded with a skull and the words "White Sliced Death," armor in his crusade for whole grains. Still, his no-hostages approach to white flour and regional grains has earned him the respect of many in the local-food movement.

"I think what we're doing is radical," Mr. Prager said. "It's radical to make good, organic, clean food affordable to more people."

The collective has a point. It is a curious quirk of contemporary America that a 6-year-old from Burlington, Vt., and a 6-year-old from Burlington, Wash., can eat entirely identical sandwiches for lunch. Once, that would have been impossible. Vermont bread was made with Vermont wheat, and Washington bread was made with Washington wheat, made from local grains ground in local mills.

But in the late 19th century, a new technology arrived from Europe, changing American flour: roller mills, which separate the bran—the "whole" part of whole wheat—from the kernel. Without the bran's oils and proteins, the chalky "all-purpose flour" that most Americans would recognize today is inert and easier to preserve.

Although it keeps longer, white flour is less nutritious, as the bran holds most of the kernel's fiber. Dr. Jones also thinks it is wasteful in an agricultural system struggling to adapt to climate change.

"If you're a farmer and you grow 100 pounds of wheat, only 70 of it is going to be made into food," Dr. Jones said "If you wanted to raise the yield of wheat tomorrow, just eat the whole kernel."

Without added chemicals to keep the bread soft and mold-free, the approachable loaf has a shelf life of about a week before it goes stale. This requirement also helps ensure that the bread stays local; any time spent traveling to a store would waste precious freshness.

"There's no reason that bread should keep for this long," said Dr. Jones, shaking a mass-produced loaf with a sell-by date of June 2018 that is still soft. He keeps it in the lab to help make his case.

Today, after millenniums as a daily staple, good bread has almost become a luxury item. Whole-wheat flour can be expensive, especially if it's organic. Loaves baked by hand cost more, as bakers need to be paid for their time and labor.

Even \$6 for the approachable loaf can be a steep price for many families. But though it's not as cheap as Wonder Bread, the loaf is

close in price to most other whole-wheat options sold in supermarkets. Members of the collective hope that, together, they get Americans to take bread more seriously.

"People care about their hops and their cheese and their coffee and their dairy and their meat, but they don't even think twice about their grains," Ms. Marvin said. "But bread is the most broken."

#### RECOGNIZING KING ARTHUR FLOUR

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, Vermont's King Arthur Flour has long been a worldwide leader in culinary circles. Today, I would like to recognize the company's effort to produce a healthier bread, called Just Bread. King Arthur Flour, which is an employee-owned company in Norwich, VT, sells 350 loaves of Just Bread each week and also donates loaves to a local food shelf, in the true tradition of Vermonters reaching out to help others. In recognition of these efforts, I ask that the February 18, 2020, article "The Whole-Grain Grail: A Sandwich Bread With Mass Appeal," by Amelia Nierenberg from the New York Times, be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

[From the New York Times, Feb. 18, 2020]

#### THE WHOLE-GRAIN GRAIL: A SANDWICH BREAD WITH MASS APPEAL (By Amelia Nierenberg)

ELMORE, VT.—When Blair Marvin started making and selling bread 15 years ago, she promised herself three things: She would never preslice it. She would never bake it in a pan. And she would certainly never sell it in plastic.

But three years ago, as she was helping out in the one-room schoolhouse where her son, Phineas, attended first grade, she realized she had a problem. At lunch, his friends weren't eating sandwiches made from the stone-ground, organic loaves she and her husband baked at Elmore Mountain Bread, and sold in local supermarkets. Sure, the students had Vermont-churned cheese from Vermont-raised cows. But their bread often came from a national bread company, made from white flour or laced with preservatives.

"All of these preconceived notions and standards I set for myself," said Ms. Marvin, 39. "None of it mattered. If Phineas's peers weren't eating our bread, then we were doing something wrong."

So she broke her vow. Using mostly whole-wheat flour, stone-ground in a mill made by New American Stone Mills, a company owned by her husband, Andrew Heyn, she developed a new loaf—soft, sliced and sealed in plastic.

"Everybody should have access to healthy food," she said. "We're trying to make something that is recognizable to the general population. It's a way of getting real bread into people's diets." Ms. Marvin and Mr. Heyn are part of a collective of about 40 bakers, millers, teachers and wheat-breeders who work with the Bread Lab, a famed research center affiliated with Washington State University that has long focused on developing wheat varieties specific to regions of the country. Since last April, using guidelines established by the lab, the collective has pursued a common goal: making a whole-grain loaf that's familiar-looking and affordable enough to appeal to a mass audience.

The Bread Lab calls it "the approachable loaf," but each bakery in the Bread Lab Collective makes a slightly different version, informed by local tastes and local grains. Elmore Mountain Bread calls its bread the Vermont Redeemer, after a type of local wheat. Zingerman's Bakehouse, in Ann Arbor, Mich., calls its loaf State St. Wheat. King Arthur Flour, an employee-owned company in Norwich, Vt., christened its version Just Bread and published a recipe for home bakers on its website. It sells 350 of the loaves a week and donates others to a food pantry, said Karen Colberg, a chief executive at King Arthur Flour.

Whatever the name, the approachable loaf is made in 20 states, from Kalispell, Mont., to New Haven, Conn., as well as in England, Canada and Australia. For each loaf sold, 10 cents goes back to the Bread Lab to help fund grain research.

The loaf is something of a Trojan horse, a way to sneak healthy ingredients onto the taste buds of a younger generation. Its disguise as a standard-issue sandwich bread might be just the guerrilla tactic needed to get regional whole grains integrated into the developed world's diet.

"If it's crusty, you're not going to get soccer moms saying, 'Hey, we need to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches out of this,'" said Anthony Ambeliotis, a member of the collective who sells a version of the approachable loaf for \$4.50 at Mediterra Bakehouse, his family bakery outside Pittsburgh.

Despite a growing interest in baking bread and declining consumption of white bread, most loaves sold in America are still less than ideal in nutrients and fiber. Even the whole-grain breads that have reached a national market sometimes contain chemical preservatives or additives, like flavor enhancers or sugars.

"Why is it that 'affordable' has to be this hyper-centralized, hyper-processed product?" said Stephen Jones, the director of the Bread Lab, standing in its flour-covered research kitchen in Burlington, Wash., about 70 miles north of Seattle.

Since he founded the lab in 2011, Dr. Jones has tried to reinvent bread by promoting regional grain, breeding wheat varieties that taste good, like heirloom strains, but have a strong yield, like most modern hybrids. At the Grain Gathering conference, an annual meeting he hosts at the lab, enthusiasts and members of the collective come together to discuss how to incorporate the lab's research into craft baking.

"Once, if you said, 'I want to put my bread in a plastic bag and I want it sliced,' people would be like: 'I think you're at the wrong conference,'" said Louie Prager, an owner of Prager Brothers Artisan Breads in San Diego, which sold 4,800 approachable loaves last year, at \$5 apiece. "But now, it's fine to make a bread that works better for more people."

In summer 2018, Dr. Jones laid out his new vision. Like Ms. Marvin, he recognized that the collective needed to pivot and work with, rather than against, an American palate shaped by generations of white-bread sandwiches. To build the base formula for the new bread, he turned to Jeff Yankellow, a baker and the western region sales manager for King Arthur Flour.

"It's not the bricks of whole wheat bread that you think of from the hippie days," Mr. Yankellow said. "We're making really good stuff."

The Bread Lab has set three strict parameters for the approachable loaf: More than 60 percent of the flour must be whole wheat; it can't have more than seven ingredients, all of which have to be real food, not chemical additives; and it can't cost more than \$6.

"It's local, and I know the people who make it," said Elaina Lefevre, 27, who regularly buys Ms. Marvin's loaf for her young daughter at the Hannaford supermarket in Morrisville, Vt. "Five ingredients or less on a label is what I aim for."

Bread is among the simplest and most mundane things humans eat. It's in our prayers: Give us this day our daily bread. It's in our wallets: our bread and butter.

But bread has also been a catalyst for change. In 1789, the high price of bread brought angry protesters to the streets of Paris. In 2011, it did again, in Cairo's Tahrir Square.

"There's nothing more revolutionary than bread," Dr. Jones said. "But there's also nothing more mundane or pedestrian than bread. It's who we are."

Dr. Jones often works in an apron branded with a skull and the words "White Sliced Death," armor in his crusade for whole grains. Still, his no-hostages approach to white flour and regional grains has earned him the respect of many in the local-food movement.

"I think what we're doing is radical," Mr. Prager said. "It's radical to make good, organic, clean food affordable to more people."

The collective has a point. It is a curious quirk of contemporary America that a 6-year-old from Burlington, Vt., and a 6-year-old from Burlington, Wash., can eat entirely identical sandwiches for lunch. Once, that would have been impossible. Vermont bread was made with Vermont wheat, and Washington bread was made with Washington wheat, made from local grains ground in local mills.

But in the late 19th century, a new technology arrived from Europe, changing American flour: roller mills, which separate the bran—the "whole" part of whole wheat—from the kernel. Without the bran's oils and proteins, the chalky "all-purpose flour" that most Americans would recognize today is inert and easier to preserve.

Although it keeps longer, white flour is less nutritious, as the bran holds most of the kernel's fiber. Dr. Jones also thinks it is wasteful in an agricultural system struggling to adapt to climate change.

"If you're a farmer and you grow 100 pounds of wheat, only 70 of it is going to be made into food," Dr. Jones said. "If you wanted to raise the yield of wheat tomorrow, just eat the whole kernel."

Without added chemicals to keep the bread soft and mold-free, the approachable loaf has a shelf life of about a week before it goes stale. This requirement also helps ensure that the bread stays local; any time spent traveling to a store would waste precious freshness.

"There's no reason that bread should keep for this long," said Dr. Jones, shaking a mass-produced loaf with a sell-by date of June 2018 that is still soft. He keeps it in the lab to help make his case.

Today, after millennia as a daily staple, good bread has almost become a luxury item. Whole-wheat flour can be expensive, especially if it's organic. Loaves baked by hand cost more, as bakers need to be paid for their time and labor.

Even \$6 for the approachable loaf can be a steep price for many families. But though it's not as cheap as Wonder Bread, the loaf is close in price to most other whole-wheat options sold in supermarkets. Members of the collective hope that, together, they get Americans to take bread more seriously.

"People care about their hops and their cheese and their coffee and their dairy and their meat, but they don't even think twice about their grains," Ms. Marvin said. "But bread is the most broken."

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN JOSEPH VICTOR SHELDON III

• Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, today, I would like to recognize Capt. Joseph Victor Sheldon III, command chaplain, 4th Marine Division, for his 32 years of service in the U.S. Navy as he approaches his retirement ceremony. Captain Sheldon will be dearly missed by those who served with him, and our country thanks him for his dedicated service.

Captain Sheldon served in a unique and critically important role as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy. His recognition of the importance of this role allowed him to effectively serve the soldiers he served with, as well as their families and civilian military workers. Military chaplains are also charged with forging relationships with their counterparts around the world when they serve abroad. Captain Sheldon took this responsibility in stride and provided a blueprint on how military chaplains should build relationships with their religious counterparts.

His service included time in the Middle East following 9/11, Germany, the Pentagon, as well as serving as the Director of Religious Affairs of the Combined Joint Task Force in the Horn of Africa, CJTF-HOA. Louisiana and the entire Nation are grateful for Captain Sheldon's life of service to our great country.●

### RECOGNIZING MINOT, NORTH DAKOTA

• Mr. CRAMER. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the city of Minot. It has been 60 years since the U.S. Air Force and Minot began working together to establish the Minot Air Force Base in northwestern North Dakota. This was in the late 1950s, when Minot leaders stepped up to buy the land where the air base now stands. Throughout the ensuing decades of growth and change in the Minot community and the base itself, this cooperation has continued.

This year, the Air Force Global Strike Command has recognized this solid partnership by awarding its Barksdale Trophy to the city of Minot. This honor is given to the community providing the most outstanding support to one of its bases. Minot Air Force Base's 5th Bomb Wing and 91st Missile Wing support the Air Force Global Strike Command. The trophy is awarded by Shreveport and Bossier, LA, which are home to the command and the Barksdale Air Force Base.

The Minot Area Chamber of Commerce submitted the city's nomination for this award and in it detailed many notable projects and partnerships over the years. This includes a community auction, which for 30 years has raised \$800,000-plus for programs supporting the morale of those at the base. Another 30-year event is a Military Ball,

bringing airmen and their spouses and area residents together for a special evening. A favorite holiday tradition is the thousands of home-baked cookies delivered to airmen who are spending their first year in Minot and are unable to be home for Christmas. Those stationed at the base and their families reciprocate by volunteering to help with Minot's many programs and annual events, including the North Dakota State Fair and the Norsk Hostfest.

In North Dakota, we take pride in the two Air Force bases within our borders that help to safeguard world peace. The support we give to those who call North Dakota home while stationed at these bases is not done for recognition nor awards. Yet, receiving the Barksdale Trophy is a well-deserved nod to North Dakota's legendary hospitality and its steadfast support of the Minot Air Force Base.

Mr. President, I congratulate the residents of the Minot area for being awarded this prestigious Barksdale Trophy. On behalf of all North Dakotans, I thank them for their support of our Nation's military and for welcoming those who are called to serve in this noble mission.●

### TRIBUTE TO TERRY HILL

• Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I am speaking today to highlight a service-disabled veteran and my constituent, Terry Hill, who is the CEO and co-founder of Rapid Application Group, an additive manufacturing facility just outside of my hometown of Tulsa in Broken Arrow, OK. Mr. Hill is a hero who served his Nation nobly as a UH-60 Black Hawk medical evacuation pilot, flying more than 750 combat missions serving in the U.S. Army.

Due to Mr. Hill's experience, he knows better than anyone just how essential the technology of additive manufacturing can be in the field to support nonflight-critical parts to increase the overall readiness and force of our military. Additive manufacturing has improved military readiness and enabled the military services to be more self sustainable. Continued advancement in this area will further improve our military's readiness and overall ability to accomplish the mission at hand.

When Mr. Hill returned home and started his business, he continued to serve our Nation by taking care of his fellow veterans. He is committed to hiring veterans to work in his facility and is known within our community for seeking out opportunities to help those who have worn the uniform. I take this opportunity today to highlight and thank Mr. Hill for his service in the U.S. Army, but also for his continued service in delivering needed tools to the warfighter and for supporting our veterans.●

## REMEMBERING DR. THOMAS L. MORIN

• Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, on February 25, Indiana lost a great Hoosier when Dr. Thomas L. Morin passed away at the age of 76. Today, I rise to pay tribute to Tom's remarkable legacy as a husband, father, and professor and to recognize his educational service to our State.

In 1965, Tom earned his bachelor's degree at Rutgers University, followed by a master's degree from the University of New Mexico in 1967. While on a full NASA scholarship, Tom subsequently earned a second master's degree and a PhD in Operations Research from Case Western Reserve.

For nearly 45 years, Tom served as a professor of industrial engineering at Purdue University in West Lafayette, IN. While at Purdue, he won the admiration and respect of his students and colleagues alike. As a professor and researcher, Tom changed the way young Hoosiers think, pushing students to pursue an analytical and practical approach to solving the world's wide-ranging issues. A lifelong educator and Fulbright scholar, Tom was a gifted mentor to his students and a valued member of the scholarly community. Tom is one of those remarkable people that made Purdue University what it is today: the national destination for pioneering research and education in engineering, research to which Tom was a key contributor.

To his family, Tom was a man of remarkable character and passion. He was utterly devoted to his children, Susan, whom he met in 1962 and with whom he remained inseparable for 58 years. As avid travelers, Tom and Susan toured the world together, from Las Vegas, to the Sahara and the Greek Isles. Beyond his own family, Tom served as a role model and a leader in his community. On behalf of the Hoosier State, I recognize how fortunate we are that Tom dedicated his life, passion, and knowledge to Indiana.

While West Lafayette has lost a pillar of its community with Tom's passing, I believe that his work will serve as a legacy for future generations. I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our sympathies to Tom's wife, Susan; two children, Michael and Marisa; and four grandchildren, Andrew, Gaby, Charlie, and Kennedy, as they remember the great life of Dr. Thomas L. Morin.●

## 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 passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1771. An act to require consultations on reuniting Korean Americans with family members in North Korea.

H.R. 2444. An act to authorize the Secretary of State to make direct loans under

section 23 of the Arms Export Control Act, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2877. An act to add Ireland to the E-3 nonimmigrant visa program.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1365) to make technical corrections to the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act.

## MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1771. An act to require consultations on reuniting Korean Americans with family members in North Korea; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 2444. An act to authorize the Secretary of State to make direct loans under section 23 of the Arms Export Control Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

## MEASURES DISCHARGED PETITION

We, the undersigned Senators in accordance with Chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, hereby direct that the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 56, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to "Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability", and further, that the joint resolution be placed upon the Legislative Calendar under General Orders.

Richard J. Durbin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Tom Udall, Tina Smith, Dianne Feinstein, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jacky Rosen, Tammy Baldwin, Sherrod Brown, Margaret Wood Hassan, Benjamin L. Cardin, Robert Menendez, Jeanne Shaheen, Edward J. Markey, Martin Heinrich, Doug Jones, Angus S. King, Jr., Jack Reed, Patrick J. Leahy, Thomas R. Carper, Richard Blumenthal, Ron Wyden, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Debbie Stabenow, Christopher Murphy, Amy Klobuchar, Tim Kaine, Mazie Hirono, Jeff Merkley, Gary C. Peters, Charles E. Schumer, Christopher A. Coons, Michael F. Bennet, Tammy Duckworth.

## MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following joint resolution was discharged from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, by petition, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 802(c), and placed on the calendar:

S.J. Res. 56. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to "Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability".

## MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

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

S. 3422. A bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Parks

and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Indian Education, and to provide permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and for other purposes.

## PRIVILEGED NOMINATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

On request by Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Finance: Sarah C. Arbes, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services, vice Matthew Bassett.

On request by Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Finance: Jason J. Fichtner, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Social Security Advisory Board for a term expiring September 30, 2024, vice Lanhee J. Chen.

## 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-4237. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Review Group, Commodity Credit Corporation, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance Programs" (RIN0560-AI50) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4238. A communication from the Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-4239. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Sustainment), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Annual National Defense Stockpile Operations and Planning Report"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4240. 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 "Health Promotion" (RIN0790-AK25) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4241. A communication from the Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting a legislative proposal entitled "The Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection Whistleblower Award Incentive Legislative Proposal"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4242. A communication from the Senior Counsel, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, a policy statement entitled "Responsible Business Conduct: Self-Assessing, Self-Reporting, Remediating, and Cooperating" received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office

of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4243. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Public Unit and Nonmember Shares" (RIN3313-AF00) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4244. 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 "Military Lending Act Limitations on Terms of Consumer Credit Extended to Service Members and Dependents" (RIN0790-ZA14) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4245. A communication from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Exemptions From Investment Adviser Registration for Advisers to Certain Rural Business Investment Companies" (RIN3235-AM68) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4246. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting a legislative proposal relative to the "Department of Energy (DOE) Organization Act of 1977 (as amended)"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4247. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting a legislative proposal relative to the "Energy Policy Act of 2005"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4248. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting a legislative proposal relative to the "Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS)"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4249. 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 Thailand to support the sale, delivery, operation, and maintenance for S-70i helicopters in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 19-039); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4250. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to sections 36(c) and (d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad and the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services to Australia to support the design and manufacture of the Aerosonde Mk 4.7G unmanned aircraft system and associated equipment in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 19-043); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4251. 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 amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services, to the Republic of Singapore to support the maintenance, repair, and overhaul of F100 engines in the amount of \$50,000,000

or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 19-084); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4252. 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 firearms abroad controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions Lists of 9mm semi-automatic pistols to Oman in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 19-057); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4253. A communication from the Inspector General, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Justification"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4254. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-219, "Housing Conversion and Eviction Clarification Amendment Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4255. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-220, "Tingey Square Designation Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4256. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-221, "Alethia Tanner Park Designation Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4257. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-222, "Accounting Clarification for Real Estate Professionals Amendment Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4258. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-223, "Polystyrene Food Service Product and Packaging Prohibition Amendment Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4259. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-224, "Abandonment of the Highway Plan for a Portion of 39th Street, N.W., S.O. 18-41885, Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4260. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-225, "Abandonment of the Highway Plan for Eastern and Anacostia Avenues, N.E., S.O. 19-47912, Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4261. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-226, "Urban Farming Land Lease Amendment Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4262. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-227, "Student Access to Treatment Amendment Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4263. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report

on D.C. Act 23-228, "Closing a Portion of 4th Street, N.E., and a Public Alley in Square 3765, S.O. 18-41561, Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4264. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-243, "Direct Support Professional Payment Rate Act of 2020"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4265. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2019 annual report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4266. A communication from the Federal Co-Chair, Appalachian Regional Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4267. A communication from the Director of External Affairs, Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Cost-of-Living Adjustments and Identity Verification" (5 CFR Parts 1630, 1632, and 1650) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 9, 2020; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4268. A communication from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2019 Buy American Act Report for the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (OSHRC); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4269. A communication from the Assistant Administrator of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of Solriamfetol in Schedule IV" (21 CFR Part 1308) (Docket No. DEA-504) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4270. A communication from the Assistant Administrator of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Additions to Listing of Exempt Chemical Mixtures" ((RIN1117-ZA05) (Docket No. DEA-505F)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4271. A communication from the Assistant Administrator of the Diversion Control Division, Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of Lasmiditan in Schedule V" ((21 CFR Part 1308) (Docket No. DEA-558)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4272. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, two reports entitled "2019 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts" and "Judicial Business of the United States Courts", and their accompanying Uniform Resource Locators (URLs); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4273. 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 the Class E Airspace; Rifle, Colorado" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0328)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4274. 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 the Class E Airspace; Gunnison, Colorado" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0341)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4275. 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 the Class E Airspace; Missoula, Montana" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0761)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4276. 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 the Class E Airspace; Astoria, Oregon" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0315)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4277. 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-2019-0871)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4278. 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-2019-0868)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4279. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0526)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4280. 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-2019-0872)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4281. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0877)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4282. 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-2019-0727)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4283. 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-2019-0016)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4284. 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 Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2019-0869)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4285. 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 (40); Amendment No. 3893" ((RIN2120-AA65) (Docket No. 31298)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4286. 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 (61); Amendment No. 3894" ((RIN2120-AA65) (Docket No. 31299)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4287. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Office of Economics and Analytics, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Auction of Priority Access Licenses for the 3550-3650 MHz Band; Notice and Filing Requirements, Minimum Opening Bids, Upfront Payments, and Other Procedures for Auction 105; Bidding in Auction 105 Scheduled to Begin June 25, 2020" ((AU Docket No. 19-244) (FCC 20-18)) received

during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4288. A communication from the Associate Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expanding Flexible Use of the 3.7 to 4.2 GHz Band" ((GN Docket No. 18-122) (FCC 20-22)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2020; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

## PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-188. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of New Jersey respectfully urging the United States Congress to propose an amendment to the United States Constitution to prohibit the use of slavery or indentured servitude for individuals convicted of a crime; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

### SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

Whereas, The Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution was adopted in 1865, and is commonly understood to have abolished slavery and indentured servitude in the United States; and

Whereas, The Thirteenth Amendment reads: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction"; and

Whereas, The Thirteenth Amendment did not completely abolish slavery and indentured servitude, but rather allowed both slavery and indentured servitude to remain legal as punishments for individuals convicted of a crime; and

Whereas, Twenty-Five percent of the worlds incarcerated population, roughly 2.3 million people, currently reside in the United States; and

Whereas, Nearly 20 percent of federal prisoners and seven percent of state prisoners are held in private correctional facilities; and

Whereas, The private correctional facility industry is a \$4.8 billion industry; and

Whereas, In order to make a profit, private correctional facilities often rely on low cost labor provided by prison workers; and

Whereas, According to the Seventh Circuit Appeals Court, prison workers are not entitled to receive the minimum wage under the "Fair Labor Standards Act," and the average working inmate's wage is 93 cents per hour; and

Whereas, Incarcerated workers in states such as South Carolina and Texas are not paid for the work that they are forced to perform; and

Whereas, According to the Solidarity Research Center, the California prison system made a \$58 million profit from the work of prison inmates, where 4,000 California prison workers earn \$2 per day; and

Whereas, Most of the work performed by incarcerated individuals does not develop skills that are translatable to the labor market outside of prison; and

Whereas, Therefore, it is appropriate for Congress to adopt an amendment to the United States Constitution to prohibit the use of slavery and indentured servitude for incarcerated individuals: Now, therefore,

*Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

1. This House urges Congress to propose an Amendment to the United States Constitution to prohibit the use of slavery, indentured servitude, and involuntary servitude within the United States or any of its territories.

2. Copies of this resolution as filed with the Secretary of State shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and each member of Congress elected from this State.

POM-189. A resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey urging the United States Congress and the President of the United States to provide funding and other incentives to states to promote hydrogen fuel cell vehicle usage; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

#### ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION NO. 38

Whereas, There is a vital need to support transportation energy sources other than imported and domestic fossil fuels, which adversely affect economic growth, cause air pollution, and contribute to climate change; and

Whereas, The promotion of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and the infrastructure needed to refuel them would reduce the billions of dollars that New Jersey citizens, businesses, and institutions pay each year to foreign oil suppliers for the gasoline and diesel fuels needed to support an estimated 77 billion on-road vehicle miles traveled annually in the State; and

Whereas, Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and related refueling infrastructure can be used to attract new business and industries to the State; and

Whereas, New Jersey residents continue to breathe unhealthy levels of air toxins, such as oxides of nitrogen and ozone, which can compromise their health; and

Whereas, Air pollution is particularly harmful for children with asthma and seniors with breathing problems or other health issues, resulting in missed school days, asthma attacks, and even premature deaths; and

Whereas, Air quality will continue to deteriorate if practical approaches to transportation energy sources and transportation infrastructure in the State are not adopted; and

Whereas, Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles are zero emission—they run on compressed hydrogen fuel cells that produce electricity to propel the vehicle—so operating them does not produce air pollution; and

Whereas, Global warming is a serious threat to New Jersey, putting the State's beaches, waterfront communities, and tourism industry at risk from sea-level rise, and threatening to cause dramatic and costly interruptions in vital transportation and shipping infrastructure; and

Whereas, The State of New Jersey set strong standards to reduce global warming and air pollution and to increase renewable energy production through the passage of the "Global Warming Response Act" and the adoption of a strong renewable energy mandate on the State's utilities; and

Whereas, Hydrogen can be produced using only electricity and water, so hydrogen fuel cell vehicles can be fueled and operated without generating carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases; now, therefore, and be it

*Resolved by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. This House respectfully urges the United States Congress and the President of the United States to provide financial support

and other incentives to the states to promote and incentivize the local adoption of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles as a means of reducing the nation's dependence on fossil fuels, particularly imported fossil fuels, which would also serve to mitigate the detrimental effects of global warming and air pollution caused by vehicle emissions.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the President and Vice President of the United States; the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate; The Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives; and every member of Congress elected from this State.

POM-190. A report from the Housing Authority of the City of High Point, North Carolina entitled "Housing Authority of the City of High Point 2019 Annual Report"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

#### 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. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 3423. A bill to direct the Joint Committee on the Library, in accordance with section 1831 of the Revised Statutes, to accept a statue depicting Harriet Tubman from the Harriet Tubman Statue Commission of Maryland and display the statue in a prominent location in the Capitol; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. HARRIS (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BENNET, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 3424. A bill to end preventable maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity in the United States and close disparities in maternal health outcomes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3425. A bill to provide incentives for businesses to keep jobs in America, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 3426. A bill to deter anticompetitive exclusionary conduct that harms competition and consumers, to enhance the ability of the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission to enforce the antitrust laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 3427. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works to digitize and make publicly available geographic information system mapping data relating to public access to Federal land and waters for outdoor recreation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 3428. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to improve Federal agency telework programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 3429. A bill to amend the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977 with respect to assessments of conservation programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 3430. A bill to promote diversity at the Department of State, to direct the Secretary of State to review the termination characterization of former members of the Department who were fired by reason of the sexual orientation of the official, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 3431. A bill to require online marketplaces to disclose certain verified information regarding high-volume third party sellers of consumer products to inform consumers; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 3432. A bill to support the advanced manufacturing technologies program of the Food and Drug Administration, to establish National Centers of Excellence in Advanced Pharmaceutical Manufacturing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 3433. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make certain improvements in the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

#### SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BOOKER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. Res. 537. A resolution encouraging the Trump Administration to maintain protections under the National Environmental Policy Act and reverse ongoing administrative actions to weaken this landmark law and its protections for American communities; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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

S. Res. 538. A resolution authorizing the use of the atrium in the Philip A. Hart Senate Office Building for the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, a semiannual event for the Drug Enforcement Administration; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

#### ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 117

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 117, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 178

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms.



MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 178, a bill to condemn gross human rights violations of ethnic Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, and calling for an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of these communities inside and outside China.

S. 182

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) 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. 208

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 208, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 237

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 237, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to permit nurse practitioners and physician assistants to satisfy the documentation requirement under the Medicare program for coverage of certain shoes for individuals with diabetes.

S. 259

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 259, a bill to impose criminal sanctions on certain persons involved in international doping fraud conspiracies, to provide restitution for victims of such conspiracies, and to require sharing of information with the United States Anti-Doping Agency to assist its fight against doping, and for other purposes.

S. 959

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) and the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) were added as cosponsors of S. 959, a bill to establish in the Smithsonian Institution a comprehensive women's history museum, and for other purposes.

S. 1015

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1015, a bill to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to review and make certain revisions to the Standard Occupational Classification System, and for other purposes.

S. 1125

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr.

SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1125, a bill to amend the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

S. 1381

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) 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. 1421

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1421, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23d Headquarters Special Troops and the 3133d Signal Service Company in recognition of their unique and distinguished service as a "Ghost Army" that conducted deception operations in Europe during World War II.

S. 1835

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1835, a bill to reauthorize the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, and for other purposes.

S. 1918

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

S. 2461

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2461, a bill to designate a portion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness.

S. 2539

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

S. 2748

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

S. 2766

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2766, a bill to support and expand civic engagement and political leadership of adolescent girls around the world, and other purposes.

S. 2783

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr.

BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2783, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Park Service Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, and for other purposes.

S. 3103

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3103, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to restore State authority to waive for certain facilities the 35-mile rule for designating critical access hospitals under the Medicare program.

S. 3144

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3144, a bill to establish a competitive grant program to support out-of-school-time youth workforce readiness programs, providing employability skills development, career exploration, employment readiness training, mentoring, work-based learning, and workforce opportunities for eligible youth.

S. 3167

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3167, a bill to prohibit discrimination based on an individual's texture or style of hair.

S. 3242

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 3242, a bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to protect privacy rights, and for other purposes.

S. 3350

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3350, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to deem certain State Veterans homes meeting certain health and safety standards as meeting conditions and requirements for skilled nursing facilities under the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

S. 3360

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3360, a bill to establish the National Center for the Advancement of Aviation.

S. 3372

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) were added

as cosponsors of S. 3372, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for treatment of certain respiratory protective devices as covered countermeasures for purposes of targeted liability protections for pandemic and epidemic products and security countermeasures, and for other purposes.

S. 3391

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3391, a bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to carry out an active transportation investment program to make grants to eligible applicants to build safe and connected options for bicycles and walkers within and between communities, and for other purposes.

S. 3415

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 3415, a bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.

S. 3419

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3419, a bill to amend the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921, to provide for the establishment of a trust for the benefit of all unpaid cash sellers of livestock, and for other purposes.

S. 3422

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 3422, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish, fund, and provide for the use of amounts in a National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund to address the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Indian Education, and to provide permanent, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 6, a joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment.

S. RES. 536

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 536, a resolution recognizing the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the 30th anniversary of the restoration of their independence.

## SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

## SENATE RESOLUTION 537—ENCOURAGING THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION TO MAINTAIN PROTECTIONS UNDER THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT AND REVERSE ONGOING ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS TO WEAKEN THIS LANDMARK LAW AND ITS PROTECTIONS FOR AMERICANS COMMUNITIES

Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BOOKER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

S. RES. 537

Whereas the National Environmental Policy Act is one of the Nation's bedrock environmental laws that has helped protect the Nation's environment and public health for half a century;

Whereas the National Environmental Policy Act was passed by an overwhelming bipartisan majority in Congress and has long enjoyed widespread public support;

Whereas the National Environmental Policy Act has a basic but critical purpose of directing Federal agencies to identify and disclose the significant environmental and public health impacts of major Federal actions before such actions are taken, encouraging a "look before you leap" approach in Federal decision making;

Whereas the National Environmental Policy Act appropriately gives the public a chance to review and give input on major projects before building and development starts, resulting in improved, more democratic government decision making on everything from fossil fuel, transportation, and water infrastructure decisions to habitat and ecosystem conservation;

Whereas the National Environmental Policy Act is one of the most important tools available in the fight against the climate crisis;

Whereas efforts to block the enforcement of the National Environmental Policy Act will make it easier for corporate polluters to hide the air, water, and climate impacts of major projects;

Whereas efforts to block the enforcement of the National Environmental Policy Act will undermine critical building requirements that make our roads, bridges, and other infrastructure safer and better prepared to withstand natural disasters such as wildfires, floods, and storms, which are getting more destructive and severe as a result of climate change;

Whereas efforts to block the enforcement of the National Environmental Policy Act will require the United States to spend billions more taxpayer dollars on infrastructure projects that won't survive the effects of climate change;

Whereas the National Environmental Policy Act is a critical civil rights tool that

gives all Americans a voice in Federal decision making by allowing communities to be informed and weigh in on major proposed projects affecting their communities;

Whereas the National Environmental Policy Act requires Federal agencies to evaluate the degree to which proposed projects affect air quality, water quality, public health, and public safety in nearby communities and consider alternative approaches that would be better for nearby communities and the environment;

Whereas before the enactment of the National Environmental Policy Act there was often no way for people living in disadvantaged communities to become aware of, much less have their voices heard on, major projects that would result in disproportionate health and environmental impacts in their neighborhoods;

Whereas that when the National Environmental Policy Act's public input process is cut short or weakened, ill-conceived projects advance that can have devastating public health and environmental consequences for American communities; and

Whereas the National Environmental Policy Act's charge to "foster and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony" is timeless and its insistence on meaningful local involvement, sustainable development, and deliberate Federal decision making was, and remains, visionary: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the value of the National Environmental Policy Act;

(2) supports the continued enforcement of longstanding legal requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, including the required consideration of climate change when developing and planning Federal infrastructure projects; and

(3) opposes the Trump administration's ongoing efforts to undermine the National Environmental Policy Act through the regulatory process.

## SENATE RESOLUTION 538—AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE ATRIUM IN THE PHILIP A. HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING FOR THE NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY, A SEMI-ANNUAL EVENT FOR THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. BLUNT) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 538

*Resolved*,

## SECTION 1. USE OF THE ATRIUM IN THE HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING FOR TAKE BACK DAY.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The atrium in the Philip A. Hart Senate Office Building is authorized to be used on April 22, 2020 for the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, a semiannual event of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

(b) PREPARATIONS.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the event described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate.

## AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I have 7 requests for committees to meet

during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Matthew P. Donovan, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, and William Jordan Gillis, of Georgia, and Victor G. Mercado, of California, both to be an Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of Defense.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

The Committee on Rules and Administration is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at 11 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nomination: James E. Trainor III, of Texas, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed roundtables.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION POLICY AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

The Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights of the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The Subcommittee on Intellectual Property of the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2020

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, March 11; 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; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration S.J. Res. 56 and that all time expire at noon; finally, that following disposition of S.J. Res. 56, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:37 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 10 a.m.