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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Arise, O Judge of the Earth, and bring healing and help to our Nation and world. We praise You that Your plans succeed and Your precepts are sure.

Lord, You know our thoughts before we think them. Encourage our lawmakers to do Your will. Give them the wisdom to totally depend upon Your unfailing love, remembering that unless You help them, they labor in vain.

Lord, when doubts fill their minds, provide them with the renewed hope in the ultimate triumph of Your purposes.

We pray in Your strong 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. LOEFFLER). The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

LITHUANIA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, 30 years ago today, the freely elected Parliament of Lithuania declared the restoration of that country's independence. Lithuania's brave actions began the breakup of the Soviet Union, something all freedom-loving Americans ought to be celebrating.

The modern Republic of Lithuania is 102 years old as of last month, and the

United States has maintained continuous diplomatic relations with Lithuania since 1992—in other words, since the period of time that the Soviet Union had jurisdiction over it. In these last 30 years, since the return of freedom, we have seen the partnership between our two countries become stronger than ever.

Lithuania is a close U.S. ally, a beacon of Western values, and very much on the frontlines of freedom. I thank Lithuania for its friendship, for its important contributions to our North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance, and for its vocal defense of our shared values.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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 President Trump visited the Capitol to discuss the ongoing efforts to fight the new coronavirus and its growing footprint here in the United States.

As Vice President PENCE, Dr. Anthony Fauci, and the other administration experts related in their briefing yesterday, we should expect a number of cases to continue to climb throughout our country. Fortunately, our Nation was rated the best prepared in the world for this kind of outbreak, and we are continuing to scale up our response every day.

My home State of Kentucky currently has eight confirmed cases. I applaud the efforts of State and local leaders who are working together with Federal officials to proceed carefully and intelligently.

Our public health experts are compiling the best guidance for individuals, families, businesses, schools, and healthcare professionals in one place, and www.coronavirus.gov is the place to go. I encourage every American to read through the information, particularly anyone whose personal circumstances make additional precautions a wise idea.

President Trump and Senators also discussed potential policies to soften the economic impact of the virus. Over the last 3 years, we have built a historically strong economy of American workers and middle-class families. We should take sensible steps to help that momentum continue, notwithstanding this new challenge.

I am glad the Secretary of the Treasury and the Speaker of the House are engaging in direct bipartisan talks on this subject. Congress has already provided billions in new funding to Federal, State, and local health leaders. I hope we can bring the same bipartisan energy to any steps that prove necessary to support our strong U.S. economy.

Now, it has been sad but not surprising to see some of President Trump's Democratic critics here in Washington fall back on the same old predictable partisan attacks, even at a time like this, but across the country, where leaders are working together on the frontlines, we have seen something different. I want to commend the Democratic Governor of California, who stated on Monday that he had been in close touch with the President and Vice President and appreciated their attention and support.

Here is what he said:

He said everything I could have hoped for. . . . We had a very long conversation, and

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



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every single thing he said, they followed through on.

That is the Governor of California talking about the Republican President of the United States. He praised the administration's work on this and said: "It starts at the top."

So, clearly, this does not have to be a time for partisan bickering. The American people know that. The leaders around the country know that. I hope our Democratic colleagues here in Washington understand the American people expect us to be working together on this problem.

ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, now on another matter, yesterday, both the House and Senate were briefed by top intelligence community officials on the state of ongoing efforts to protect the security of American elections.

I was glad that so many Members took the chance to hear directly from the experts. This issue is very important, and it is bad for our democracy that some have sought to politicize it.

All of us should acknowledge the threat, and all of us should applaud the unprecedented step this administration has taken to protect against it. These significant efforts undertaken by the administration and funded by the Congress are actually working.

Since 2017, the hundreds of millions of dollars we have directed to help State and local election officials reinforce their systems have been finding their mark.

In all 50 States and across thousands of jurisdictions, new tools, more resources, and greater coordination have our Nation's defenses in a stronger place. This includes far greater coordination with the social media companies to combat foreign disinformation, as well as close collaboration between the Federal Government and State and local jurisdictions on protecting electoral infrastructure.

And to date, the intelligence community reports they have not seen any foreign interference that aims to change vote tallies or prevent Americans from voting. So the American people are absolutely right to have confidence in the integrity of our voting systems, and they actually do.

As I mentioned yesterday, one new survey has found that more than 70 percent—70 percent—of Americans are confident their State and local authorities will oversee a fair and accurate election this November. That is 70 percent of the American people who have confidence in the fairness of the elections this November.

As an aside, this is worth remembering as our Democratic colleagues try to claim that election security demands things like an unprecedented Washington power grab over the nuanced details of how States and localities conduct elections or addressing things like campaign finance. These

are longtime leftwing goals that have basically nothing whatsoever to do with the actual threats now before us.

But the American people's confidence in the key institutions of our democracy does not mean they are complacent; they aren't. The same survey shows the American people understand full well that foreign adversaries like Russia want to divide our country and distort our discourse through disinformation.

The intelligence community confirms that as well. Our intelligence experts have publicly assessed that Russia and other adversaries will continue looking for ways to warp our public debate from overseas.

We all need to be aware that our adversaries seek to exploit the openness of our society to turn Americans against ourselves. Adversaries like Russia want to exacerbate social and political tensions in our country. They want to undermine our confidence in our own election and our democratic institutions. This is why I have stressed that politicians need to be careful not to take the bait. It is why the President signed an Executive order to enable sanctions against any person or any country that attempts to meddle in our elections. It is why this administration has created new procedures for promptly notifying campaigns that are targeted by foreign entities, unlike—unlike—how the Obama administration hid the ball back in 2016, and it is why the new, tough foreign policies of the last 3 years will continue to be essential.

Narrow, tailored solutions are important, but the best way for the United States to defend ourselves and our interests against any malign behavior is to possess unquestionable strength and make it perfectly clear we are not interested in being pushed around.

I have been a Russia hawk for more than 30 years. I am on record from the late years of the Clinton administration warning Democrats not to be naive about a new President-elect by the name of Vladimir Putin, so I applaud this administration's tough stance with Russia. And I am pleased that Democrats have stopped—stopped—mocking Republicans for being too tough on Russia and have come around to our point of view.

We have come a long way since the passivity and the failures of the Obama administration back in 2016, but the work is not finished, and Senators are fooling themselves if they think this is just about Russia.

We must stay vigilant—all of us; Federal leaders, State and local election officials, and every American citizen. Every one of us has a part to play in protecting our democracy.

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

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"—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S.J. Res. 56, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 56) 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".

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. 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.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, yesterday afternoon, South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem notified me that multiple residents of South Dakota have tested positive for the coronavirus. While this is obviously something we had hoped to avoid, we knew this was a possibility, and South Dakota has spent weeks preparing to deal with an outbreak.

Over the next few days, public health officials will be checking into where these individuals have been so that anyone with whom they came in contact can be notified. My staff and I are working closely with the Governor and her team, and I will continue to carefully monitor the situation.

At the Federal level, I am focused on making sure that State and local governments have the resources they need to deal with the virus. Last week, I was proud to support bipartisan legislation committing significant Federal resources to the coronavirus fight.

I am praying for all of the South Dakotans who are affected by the virus, and I want to thank the healthcare workers who are on the frontlines of this fight. We are lucky to have you.

S. 2657

Madam President, I am disappointed that the Senate failed to move forward on the American Energy Innovation Act this week. This is a bipartisan

piece of legislation that should have been able to advance in the Senate. It contains measures from more than 60 Senators, and 90 Senators voted last week to begin debate on the bill. I am disappointed that we couldn't maintain that bipartisan momentum and get this bill over the finish line.

The United States is in a pretty good position when it comes to energy right now. Our energy supply is abundant, and energy prices are generally affordable. But we are in this position for a reason—because we took steps to increase our domestic energy supply and lessen our dependence upon foreign oil.

We can't afford to become complacent. If we want to keep American energy affordable and abundant, we need to make sure that we stay on the cutting edge of energy innovation and continue to invest in our domestic energy supply, from oil and natural gas to renewable energy sources like hydropower and wind. We also need to make sure we stay on top of threats to our energy grid and our energy security.

The American Energy Innovation Act is designed to help maintain American strength in the energy sector. It invests in a wide range of clean energy technologies, from wind and solar to hydropower and geothermal. It focuses on improving research into carbon capture, and it directs the establishment of a research and development program to identify ways to use captured carbon.

The bill also invests in advanced nuclear energy research so that we can regain our edge in the use of this clean energy technology, and it focuses on improving energy storage. Many modern clean energy technologies are intermittent or lack the reliability of traditional electric sources. The amount of energy produced from wind, for example, is dependent on the amount of wind on any given day, so it must be backed up by a traditional plant, often powered by natural gas. Creating new ways to store clean energy will allow us to increase our reliance on renewable energy sources.

Another area that needs to be addressed when it comes to renewable energy is recycling. Solar panels, wind turbine blades, and electric car batteries are key components of clean energy production, but all of these components eventually reach the end of their life. Both solar panels and wind turbine blades eventually have to be replaced, and car batteries eventually lose their ability to hold a full charge.

The question becomes what to do with these components. Wind turbine blades can be well over 150 feet long and weigh somewhere around 15 tons. That takes a lot of room in a landfill. In the case of electric vehicle batteries, we are not just talking about filling up landfills. We are talking about potentially hazardous waste if lithium or other materials leak from the battery.

While recycling and reuse methods exist for clean energy components, much more work needs to be done to

ensure that clean energy doesn't eventually result in massive buildups in landfills. Since roughly a quarter of the net electricity generated in my home State of South Dakota comes from wind, I am particularly interested in what it would take to recycle or reuse the blades from wind turbines on a large scale.

I am very pleased that my wind energy recycling amendment was included in the chairman's substitute amendment to the American Energy Innovation Act. My amendment would establish a competition to identify innovative uses for wind blades that have reached the end of their life, with a focus on uses that present the greatest potential for large-scale commercial deployment.

With an estimated 32,000 wind blades likely to be removed from U.S. wind turbines in the next 4 years, it is past time to get American innovators focused on this problem. I appreciate Chairman MURKOWSKI's interest in addressing this side of green energy and hope that we can continue this work.

In addition to clean energy and innovation, the American Energy Innovation Act focuses on boosting the security of our electric grid. It invests in cyber security and grid modernization and focuses on improving our domestic supply of some of the key elements and minerals that we rely on for manufacturing—everything from computer chips, to batteries, to defense applications.

Right now, we have to import too much of these critical minerals from countries like China. For the sake of our national security, it is important that we find ways to identify supplies of these minerals here at home.

Finally, the American Energy Innovation Act invests in workforce development. All of the innovative technologies in the world will not help us if we don't have the skilled workers to operate and maintain these technologies. We need to ensure that, while we are investing in innovation, we are also investing in the energy workforce of the future.

As I said, it is disappointing that the Senate wasn't able to move forward on this bipartisan legislation. I hope we will be able to continue discussing this bill and the Senate will take it up again in the near future.

The American Energy Innovation Act would promote clean energy development, help maintain a strong domestic energy supply, increase the security of our energy grid, and invest in American workers. We need to get this legislation across the finish line.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the United States has more than 1,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19, the coronavirus. The actual number, however, could be much higher. We don't truly know how many cases of coronavirus there are in the United States because our testing regime has been entirely inadequate.

The CDC took weeks to develop testing kits that worked properly, and the Federal Government was far too slow in allowing hospitals, medical labs, and public health clinics to conduct tests on their own. The New York Times this morning has a story about how doctors and clinicians in Washington State were forced to wait a period of weeks for samples of the coronavirus and approval to test patients for the virus, even after they had suspected cases. The virus was spreading in the United States for weeks, without our knowledge, because we could not reliably test for it.

Even now, the administration has been laggard about making sure that testing kits are available to all who need them, and the United States is trailing countries around the world in our testing capacity. We, who were supposed to have the greatest public health system in the world, are lagging behind many countries, and it is a matter of life and death.

Last night, I spoke with the mayor of New Rochelle, NY, where multiple infections have been confirmed and where residents are now living under a 3-square-mile containment area. The mayor told me that despite the best efforts of the State of New York—and they are doing a good job—there are not enough coronavirus testing kits for the community. I asked him what his major problem was. He said: Lack of testing kits, lack of testing. I fear that what is happening in New Rochelle will happen in cities and towns across the country. It is virtually certain that a limited quarantine or containment area will be imposed on other cities, like they were in New Rochelle, and we need to make sure the mistakes that have plagued the whole testing regime is not repeated when other cities have to be under some limited quarantine. Those cities have to be able to get the tests and resources they need, and New Rochelle still isn't getting them because of the Federal Government.

I honestly don't know why it has taken so long for the Trump administration to get a handle on testing, which is the most powerful tool in helping us respond to the spread of the virus. I honestly don't know why, after this issue with testing has been glaring and very public, the administration has still not announced anything resembling a coherent plan to fix the problem.

This morning, I am demanding that the Trump administration do five

things to improve the Nation's ability to test for the coronavirus in the United States:

One, expedite the approval of labs that are ready and willing to provide testing. Every lab that is able to provide testing should be up and running as soon as possible.

Two, provide daily updates on the volume of tests, both available and expected, and set up a special office or bureau within HHS dedicated to managing the acquisition and distribution tests. The conflicting reports and lack of information have left States unable to plan.

Three, support the use of automated testing to increase the speed and volume with which testing is conducted.

Four, ensure that patients who need tests face no out-of-pocket costs. The coverage requirements for testing are currently a patchwork of State executive orders and private company actions. We need Federal leadership. Hundreds of millions of Americans do not know if they can access affordable testing.

And, five, ensure that COVID-19, coronavirus, hotlines are fully staffed and responsive to patients and providers who have questions and concerns.

Our top priority at the moment is to confront the spread of this disease head-on. The first is making sure communities across the country have the testing capability and capacity that they need.

The public also needs clear guidance from the Federal Government regarding how to best avoid contracting this virus. It has been reported that Federal health officials recommended that older Americans refrain from air travel for this reason, but the White House overruled them. What exactly happened here? Were health officials overruled for political reasons? What is the truth? And what is the recommendation of our Federal health experts going forward, most importantly?

The coronavirus has also created turbulence in our economy and disrupted daily life for many Americans. As I have said before, by far, the best way to respond to any adverse effects on our economy is to deal with the coronavirus itself. You treat the disease, not the symptoms. But even as we focus primarily on combating the spread of COVID-19, we should consider relief to American families and workers who are impacted.

Later this morning, I will join Senators MURRAY, BROWN, DURBIN, WYDEN, CARDIN, and others to announce a series of measures that Senate Democrats believe we should take up to provide economic relief to working Americans during the coronavirus outbreak.

I will have more details at that time, at 11:30. But for now, I want to make one thing clear. When it comes to providing short-term economic relief, our priority should be the American people, not corporations.

That means targeted measures that give working families the flexibility

and support they need during a medical emergency. That means money goes directly to the people and workers affected and who need help, not money tossed out of an airplane and hope that some lands on the people who need the help.

It does not mean bailing out the oil and gas industry, as the press reported was under consideration at the White House. It does not mean deregulating the banking industry, as another report said was a part of the discussion at the White House. It does not mean another corporate tax cut.

In the face of test shortages, growing cases, and lack of medical supplies, President Trump seems more interested in bailing out oil and gas companies and other big interests than in helping the families struggling to afford coronavirus treatment.

As the spread of coronavirus continues within our borders, Democrats remain committed—absolutely committed—to finding ways we can protect Americans most at risk by this disease. President Trump should work with us in Congress to make sure we continue managing this pandemic in a measured, responsible, and transparent manner.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3415

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, Senator ALEXANDER is here. Senator MURRAY will be joining us in a moment. They are the chair and ranking member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, which has jurisdiction over this very important issue of sick leave with sick pay. Many companies do that in this country. We are the only wealthy country in the world that doesn't have a real policy. As Senator ALEXANDER says, we do this for Federal employees. It should be for more than those of us who are Federal employees.

Today, we need to get help to the people who need it now: parents whose children's schools are closed; people who aren't getting paid; people who have trouble making rent or making their mortgage payments or their student loan payments. Paid sick days are one of the most important ways we do that. That is why we need to pass this bill today.

Think about restaurant workers preparing our food. Think about what you do if your child's school closes down for a week. For so many people, taking a sick day means going without pay and potentially losing their jobs. Put yourself in their position. It is hard for us to do—we are lucky enough and privileged enough to have these jobs—and for most of our staff also. But think

about a worker making \$12 an hour. That worker has symptoms. She is the only working person in her family. She might think her illness is the coronavirus; nonetheless, her illness is debilitating enough that it is hard for her to go to work. She is making \$12 an hour. She stays home and loses \$100 that day. She has a \$700-a-month rent payment or possibly lower than that if she is making \$12 an hour. She has to make a decision: Do I go to work and potentially infect others but get my pay and maybe make myself sicker, or do I stay home to get well and give up that \$100?

Then you think about some of those other workers. Someone might be a restaurant worker preparing our food. What do you do if your child's school closes down for a week, as schools—already Ohio State, Kent State, Case Western, and Baldwin Wallace have shut their doors. They have not really shut their doors; they are doing learning by distance, tele-learning. It means a number of people at those schools are in a very different situation with their employment.

Taking a sick day means going without pay. Taking a sick day may mean losing your job. It hurts everyone. If you are lucky enough to have paid time off—everybody is at risk when more people are out and about when they are sick.

Our office gets calls from workers all the time. Senator ALEXANDER has Tennesseans calling him. Senator MURRAY has Washingtonians calling her, asking: What do I do if I come down with something? I have to choose between going to work while I am sick or losing a paycheck or losing my job.

Because of our policy, we have put people in that situation or they are in that situation, and we have an obligation now to do something about it. It is unacceptable that millions of Americans are faced with that impossible choice.

That choice gets worse. I don't know how many people are faced with that choice today. We know it is millions. Tomorrow, it will be 1.2 times that, and the next day, it may be half again. We know this is getting worse before it gets better.

I am not an alarmist. I think we have some of the best health officials in the world. We have public health professionals who I think—the Governor of Ohio, a Republican, Mike DeWine, and I have talked a couple of times extensively. People in Ohio are doing this right.

We don't always get the leadership out of the White House we would like when we see the President saying something that is almost the opposite of our public health professionals. I tend to listen to the public health professionals. I know Senator ALEXANDER does too. I would be hopeful that the President does.

We know this impossible choice is getting more and more serious. Some corporations do the right thing, but

many are not doing the right thing. Some are promising they are going to do the right thing, but promises are not enough. We need to pass this bill now.

Our legislation would require all employers to allow workers to accrue 7 days of paid sick leave, and the bill would also provide an additional 14 days that would be available immediately in the event of any public health emergency like we have right now. This is a public health emergency. We need to do emergency kind of legislation. This is an unusual, extraordinary problem. We have to do something extraordinary here. Passing this bill allowing workers to accrue 7 days of paid sick leave and providing an additional 14 days available immediately in the event of any public health emergency is what we need to do.

Congress can't wait. People are choosing between going to work sick and missing a paycheck. They are making that choice every day. People in Memphis and Cleveland and people in Omaha and Dayton are making that choice every day—do I go to work sick, or do I stay home and miss that \$120 I was going to earn this week?

We need to do this today. We need this bill to prevent the spread of coronavirus and stop this crisis from getting worse. It is about the dignity of work. It is about public safety.

I will wait for Senator MURRAY to make the UC request.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

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

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I also want to thank all of my colleagues who are coming down to speak about this today.

Families in my home State of Washington are scared. They are frustrated. They are angry. And so am I. New reporting now makes it clear that even after researchers in Seattle raised serious concerns about the possibility of community spread in Washington State and tried to work with Federal agencies to conduct testing, the administration didn't work with them to let the public know how serious the coronavirus was. You can be sure I am going to get to the bottom of this and make sure it will never happen again. I am furious that instead of acting with urgency, they did nothing; instead of acting with transparency, they kept quiet; instead of working to keep families safe, they wasted valuable time. And now in my State, 24 people have died. Over 1,000 across the country are confirmed to be infected, and experts are telling us that many more are likely to be ill.

I am hearing from people in my home State of Washington who are worried about their older relatives who are dying alone; worried about having to

miss work and being unable to pay their rent; worried about how to keep their children safe at school and how to care for them and make sure they get a nutritious meal if their schools cancel. I am hearing from small business owners who are worried because no one is now coming through their door and they are unsure how to support the workers going forward. I am hearing from communities that are worried about how they protect people who are experiencing homelessness. I have seen a lot in my years as a Senator, but I am not exaggerating when I say this is one of the most trying times I have ever seen in my State experience.

I am absolutely going to be holding this administration accountable for missing so many opportunities to get ahead of this, but I am also going to be doing everything in my power to make sure we do not miss significant opportunities. We still have time to slow this down and manage it as best we can.

Our primary goal right now for people in my home State and across the country needs to be slowing the spread of the virus in areas where there are outbreaks so that areas where it has not hit so hard yet have the time to prepare. One of the best ways we can do this is by allowing workers who feel sick or who need to stay home with a child whose school is closed to do so without losing a paycheck or their job.

Workers and their families want to do the right things for themselves and for their communities, but for many of our workers—restaurant workers, truckdrivers, service industry workers—they may not have an option to take a day off without losing their pay or losing their job. That leaves them with the impossible choice between putting food on their table and paying themselves and others. That is not a choice we should be asking anyone to make in the United States of America in the 21st century. Yet 32 million people in our country today—or about one out of every four private sector workers—are faced with this impossible choice every time they get sick. Right now, this choice has unique and potentially dire consequences.

I have been advocating for legislation to allow workers to earn paid sick days since 2004, along with my colleague Congressman ROSA DELAURO in the House. Time and again, we have been told no even though that simple step is critical, as we now see, for public health and gives workers the flexibility they need. In fact, we last introduced our bill in March of 2019, and here we are almost a year later to the day without the very policies in place that would have now helped millions of our workers and bolstered our resilience in the face of this exact kind of public healthcare crisis that paid sick days are intended to prevent and to mitigate.

We now have another opportunity to get this right. I am here to ask my col-

leagues to support our new emergency paid sick days legislation, which would ensure workers would have 14 days of paid sick leave immediately in response to public health emergencies like the one we face today in addition to allowing workers to gradually earn their 7 days of paid sick leave.

It would mean you would not lose a paycheck if, like so many parents in my home State of Washington and across the country are facing, your child's school has to close in the coming weeks because of this health outbreak. It would mean you would not lose a paycheck if your family member were quarantined and you needed to stay home to take care of him so that you would not spread the virus. Also, if you could not go to work because you were sick or your workplace were shut down, as we are seeing in so many places, you wouldn't lose pay. These are the real challenges people are now facing and will continue to face.

Our bill would help these workers immediately, the minute it becomes law. We have enough delay when it comes to paid sick days, so let's get this done. Let's keep working, as we need to do, on a comprehensive, coordinated response that focuses squarely on what our families and our workers and our small businesses need in the weeks and months ahead.

The Democrats on this side have a lot of ideas that we are laying out in response to this, including how to make sure these tests are affordable, that we support our most vulnerable communities, and that we reckon with the economic impact this crisis is having on our communities and Nation. There is a lot we need to do in the weeks and months ahead, but I urge us to start today with this simple, really important issue.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration 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; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; 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. Is there objection?

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, in reserving the right to object, I will continue to work with the Senator from Washington State, as we always do, and on a comprehensive response to the this issue, the coronavirus. She and I have had four briefings, and we will have another one tomorrow. We have a history of being able to come to agreement on these matters.

The idea of there being paid sick leave is a good idea, but if Washington, DC, thinks it is a good idea, Washington, DC, should pay for it. When I

was the Governor of Tennessee, nothing used to make me more unhappy than when some well-meaning individual in the U.S. Senate or U.S. House would come up with a big idea, pass it, take credit for it, and send me the bill.

Employees are struggling, and so are employers struggling, but it is not a cure for the coronavirus to, in the middle of this matter, put a big, new, expensive Federal mandate on employers who are struggling. Paid sick leave is a good idea, and we do it in my office. The Federal Government now does it, and many businesses do it. Yet, if the Federal Government wants to require it, the Federal Government should pay for it.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I do appreciate the fact that the Senator from Tennessee has been a great partner with me on many issues. I will keep talking to him about this.

Let me just say, without doing this, the cost to businesses is going to grow exponentially. We have already seen it on Wall Street, and we are seeing it in our communities. Because people are not getting paid, they are going to work and are spreading this virus. We are seeing the impact and will continue to see it in our communities as fewer people go to their stores or as fewer people go to their businesses.

We either do this now or we are going to continue to pay for it in the future. I am sorry it has been objected to today, because I think it is such a critical step with regard to this public health crisis we are having. We need to get this done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, as I watch up close and from afar Senator ALEXANDER's and Senator MURRAY's so often working together on issues like this, I absolutely believe Senator ALEXANDER when he says it is a good idea. Yet, as Senator MURRAY just said, there are all kinds of costs being imposed on businesses as a result of people who go to work sick. It is also more expensive for public hospitals and more expensive as more people get sick and what that means to Medicaid. These costs are impossible to quantify today with our not having a sick leave policy. A year from now, we will be able to look back on what the costs really were, and they will have been overwhelming. A solid, coherent sick leave policy—something modest like Senator MURRAY is calling for—could really make a difference.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

REMEMBERING FELIX SPARKS

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I come to the floor to remember the life and service of a Colorado hero and to reflect on an upcoming anniversary of an event during World War II.

The hero's name is Felix Sparks—a name that may very well be familiar to

the people of Colorado. Felix Sparks was born in Texas, though. We have a lot of Texans in Colorado, but this one made the right choice and stayed in Colorado. He was born in San Antonio, TX, in 1917, and he spent his childhood around Miami, AZ, where his family and father worked in a mining company. He was in high school during the Great Depression and was the eldest of five siblings.

Soon after graduating from high school, Felix decided to enlist in the U.S. Army. Upon completing his enlistment, Felix enrolled at the University of Arizona and completed the Citizens' Military Training program, which earned him a commission as a second lieutenant. Mr. Sparks then went on to pursue a pre-law degree. He had just finished his first semester of that effort when he was ordered to report for duty to the 157th Infantry Regiment in Colorado. He was ordered to report at the very beginning of World War II. That year was 1940—right before the United States officially entered World War II.

Neither Felix Sparks nor the American people knew it at the time, but World War II was about to change the history of the United States and the world forever. Felix would be on the frontlines of one of the most pivotal moments of World War II.

As a little bit of background on his work, along with the National Guard units from Oklahoma, Arizona, and New Mexico, Colorado's 157th Infantry Regiment mobilized in support of the U.S. Army's 45th Infantry Division in Oklahoma, also known as the Thunderbird Division.

The division set sail for North Africa in June 1943 for its first mission—the invasion of Sicily. Over the next 511 days, Felix Sparks and his fellow soldiers in the Thunderbird Division would participate in so many well-known combat operations in Sicily, Naples-Foggia, Rome-Arno, Southern France, the Ardennes-Alsace, Rhineland, and Central Europe. It was an incredibly well-documented, decorated campaign. Yet, of these 511 days, Felix Sparks most often recounted one day in particular more than any other. That day was April 29, 1945.

On April 29, 1945, LTC Felix Sparks was the commander of the 3rd Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, and on that day, that April day, after so many days of fighting and after what they had already seen, the 157th Infantry Regiment, along with units of the 42nd Infantry Division and the 20th Armored Infantry Division, led the liberation of approximately 32,000 prisoners at the Dachau concentration camp. Although his unit had suffered thousands of casualties over the course of the war, what Lieutenant Colonel Sparks and his soldiers discovered at Dachau was beyond compare.

Felix Sparks described that day as one of the darkest days of his lifetime and, I can only imagine, one of the darkest days of lifetimes put together. Along with many of his fellow soldiers,

he would spend the rest of his life reliving the horrors of what he witnessed at Dachau. As they neared the camp, the American forces discovered nearly 40 railroad cars that were filled with decomposing bodies. Felix Sparks said the “stench of death was overpowering” and that what he saw at the camp made Dante's *Inferno* seem “pale compared to the real hell of Dachau.” Inside the camp were even more bodies and more than 30,000 survivors—survivors of one of the darkest places in one of the darkest moments in world history.

We say we must never forget the horrors of the Holocaust, but Felix Sparks and the Americans who liberated Dachau didn't have a choice. They could never forget and will never forget.

Felix Sparks said:

The men of the 45th Infantry Division were hardened combat veterans. [We had seen so many fights.] We had been in combat almost two years at that point. While we were accustomed to death, we were not able to comprehend the type of death that we encountered at Dachau.

There is no going back. There is no forgetting. There is no trying to erase from memory the horrors of Nazism and seeing it up close. The liberation of Dachau would be one of the Thunderbird Division's final missions during World War II. The division was officially deactivated on December 7, 1945—4 years after Pearl Harbor.

Following the end of the war, Felix Sparks attended the University of Colorado Law School in Boulder, CO—my alma mater. He graduated in 1947 and started a law practice in Delta, CO, while he also served as a district attorney. In 1956, Felix Sparks was appointed as the youngest ever—in Colorado's history—associate justice of the Colorado Supreme Court.

Then, in 1958, Felix accepted the role of director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, where he was instrumental in the development of sustainable water policies for the State. For those not familiar with Colorado, this is an incredibly important position. We are a State whose history is written in water. Yet that wasn't enough for Felix Sparks. It was not all.

Felix Sparks wasn't just serving in his civilian life; he continued his military service as well. After returning home from World War II, Felix had joined the Colorado Army National Guard. He would go on to serve in and take command of the Colorado National Guard for nearly 30 years between the two—both service and commanding. He retired at the rank of brigadier general.

As both a civilian and a soldier, Felix Sparks truly exemplified servant leadership. His sense of duty to our Nation and to my home State lives on today, and I am proud to honor his legacy and life of service. Felix Sparks died on September 24, 2007, at the age of 90. He is buried in Wheat Ridge, CO.

Along with a number of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle, I

will soon be introducing a resolution to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp during World War II and to honor the service of Felix Sparks, as well as of the courageous personnel he fought alongside and of the brave men and women they saved along the way, and in memory of the tens of thousands who were brutally and savagely murdered by the Nazi regime.

We must never forget what happened. Unfortunately, far too many Americans and far too many people around the world may put aside these moments of our darkest time in history and forget or can't name a ghetto or a concentration camp today. That is something that we have to fix, that we have to correct, that we have to continue to speak of—the horrors that can never be repeated in the darkest times of our history.

I invite all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution. We already have the Senators from the States that participated in the Thunderbird Division so that we may remember the lives lost to the atrocities of the Holocaust and to World War II and remember the tens of thousands who were spared by the brave acts of our Nation's military. We must never forget. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution in one more showing to never forget.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to address the issue which will be before us at noon on the vote, but, preceding that, I would like to say a word on a different topic that certainly is on everybody's mind, and that is the coronavirus.

I was recently notified by my Governor, Governor Pritzker, that we have run into a shortage in our State of the test kits that are necessary. Some 330 Illinoisans have been tested to date, and these are people who, on physician's orders, should be tested because of exposure to coronavirus or because of the vulnerability of the patient and the suspicion that they may have been exposed to the virus.

The difficulty that we have run into is that the testing process apparently is coming to a stop. We are running out of the test kits, and there has been contact made with the Centers for Disease Control to determine why we are not getting responses on this need for additional kits in our State to test people who are truly vulnerable.

I don't believe our situation could be unique. I imagine other States are facing this same challenge.

I reached out to the Centers for Disease Control within the hour and had a lengthy conversation about the situation that we are facing.

Originally, the coronavirus test kits faced a shortage of reagents that were necessary to take the initial test. It turns out they are now facing a new challenge: It is an issue of the global supply of enzymes that are used by laboratories to analyze the test results. This is a commercially available enzyme that is now in short supply, and CDC is desperately looking for other commercial sources that are reliable that can come to the rescue.

The testing process, of course, is going to stop if the laboratories can't take the initial test results and test them to see whether they are positive or negative. They are looking for alternative ways at the CDC to meet this need. It is a critically important issue, and the lack of these enzymes limits the actual tests that can be taken across the United States.

The source at the CDC told me this situation is not unique to our country. It is a commercially produced product, and they are looking for other sources, either within the United States or without, as quickly as possible. This is a market-driven problem, and the CDC is looking across the market for sources to solve the problem.

For the time being, there is no relief in sight in Illinois or other places that have run into this same issue, where people desperately need to be tested to determine whether they are positive for this virus, and the testing, even if it takes place, cannot go through the laboratory approval.

The commercial supplies of this enzyme, apparently, are depleted at this moment. It is an urgent issue, as I mentioned repeatedly. They are looking for optional alternative platforms for this laboratory testing.

Now, I would say at this point I don't want to speculate on what that means. It is far beyond my personal expertise. But it is an indication of a desperate situation in many places. It is one that we need to respond to and quickly.

To argue that there are enough test kits that have been distributed is questionable to start with. But even if distributed and they cannot be analyzed, it really doesn't give us the information necessary to protect the Americans who may be vulnerable.

The bottom line is this. This administration is facing a challenge over test kits that still have many unanswered questions. How did other countries in the world—Korea and others—come up with test kits early on in volumes that were necessary to address this problem, and the United States did not? Why didn't we accept these test kits in other countries that apparently do come up with results that are needed and necessary?

I don't know those answers. Only time will provide them to us. But, in the meantime, we have appropriated all the funds and more asked for by the

Trump administration to deal with this issue, on a bipartisan basis, and that is exactly what we should continue to do. But we need start-to-finish straight answers from everyone in the administration and outside about this public health threat.

Credibility is the first step toward dealing with a public health challenge such as the one we face today, and this test kit issue is clearly central to our bringing this situation under control—the sooner we get straight answers and good information and can respond to it quickly, the better for our Nation.

H.J. RES. 76

Mr. President, in just a few minutes, we will see a vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate that is fairly unique. There aren't many votes in this Chamber. This one, actually, is meaningful, because this issue before us on a vote at noon today relates to student borrowers who went to colleges—primarily, for-profit colleges and universities—and ended up attending those schools, going deeply into debt by borrowing money from the government to go to school, only to learn at a later stage that they were misled.

The schools didn't tell them the truth. The schools many times told them that if they took certain courses, there was a job waiting for them. In some cases they even told how much the jobs paid. They went on to say that the schools themselves had certain people on the faculty with certain qualifications, and it turned out that wasn't true. In addition, many students were told that the hours that they took at these for-profit schools could be transferred to other schools if they wanted to complete someplace else. It turns out that wasn't true either. These students were basically defrauded.

If you can understand the predicament, here is a student customer sitting at a desk in an office at a for-profit college or university being asked questions and being given information for the most important contract they will sign in their early lives. Many of these students incurred substantial student debt based on the representations and misrepresentations of these colleges and universities.

They find out now that the schools have gone bankrupt in some cases, and some schools that didn't go bankrupt ended up providing them with training and education completely inadequate for them to find a job. Here is the student deep in debt, having wasted years of their lives in these for-profit colleges and universities with nowhere to turn. Their lives are affected by it.

Who wouldn't be? Whether it is \$20,000 or \$50,000 or \$100,000 in debt, it quickly adds up, and students find themselves literally in chains because of student debt and because of misrepresentations made by the schools.

You might say: What is the government going to do about it? We decided years ago exactly what we should do about it. We put in the Higher Education Act something called the borrower defense, and here is what it said.

If you went to a school and they lied to you, if they misrepresented what you were going to receive in your education, if they deceived you and defrauded you, and then you incurred a student debt because of it, you can go to the U.S. Department of Education under what is known as the borrower defense program and seek relief from some or all of your student debt.

This borrower defense program is not new. It has been around many years. But in the year 2014, it became a popular situation, sadly, because these for-profit schools were defrauding so many thousands of students. Over 200,000 students currently have a claim at the U.S. Department of Education that they were deceived by these for-profit schools, which are notorious for the representations and misrepresentations they make to these students.

These 200,000 students went to the Department of Education and said: Because there is statutory relief here, we are asking you, Secretary Betsy DeVos, to give us relief from this debt. We were students at these schools.

And she has refused. She has refused to take up their cases, refused to consider the merits of them, despite the fact that President Obama, before her and through the Department of Education, was actually using this program and this law to help the students.

To add insult to injury, Secretary DeVos said: Incidentally, we are going to change the standards at the Department of Education for students who feel that they have been defrauded and that the schools have misrepresented things to them.

How did she change the standards? She made it extremely difficult for these students to get any relief from the student debt from the schools that misrepresented them. Instead of the students' being able to rely, for example, on the fact that many States have investigated these schools and found fraudulent misconduct, she has established a new standard that each of the students has to prove that there was, in fact, an intentional defrauding of that student.

What does that mean? Each of these students has to lawyer up and each of these students has to have some investigative capacity to meet the new standard that has been established by Betsy DeVos at the Department of Education.

It turns out that these students are up in arms over it, and I am joining them. This measure on the floor would put an end to this new rule by Secretary DeVos and say that you have to treat students fairly when it comes to those who have been defrauded.

Yesterday, the Senate voted 55 to 41 on a bipartisan rollcall—fairly unusual, but a bipartisan rollcall—where 10 Republicans joined the Democrats to move the measure disapproving of this new rule by Secretary DeVos. I want to thank my Republican colleagues who stood up for these students and veterans.

We have veteran organizations coming to us saying: You can't do this. What happens is that we have military men and women who, when they are discharged from service, qualify for the GI bill. The GI bill pays for their college education, as it should, and I am proud that we do that. These very same schools not only take the GI benefits but then tell the students they have to turn around and borrow more money to finish what turns out to be an absolutely worthless education and training. The American Legion and many other veterans organizations are leading the charge with us to change this new Secretary Betsy DeVos standard. I thank them for that.

In 1992—that is how far back it goes—we put into law in the Higher Education Act this borrower defense so that students who were defrauded had somewhere to turn when it came to student debt they incurred. The schools misrepresented how many job placements would take place if they finished the courses. They misrepresented the earning potential of these jobs after graduation. They lied about the cost of attending these schools. They told the students their credits would transfer when, in fact, they did not. This kind of misrepresentation left these students to sign up for more student loans and go more deeply in debt because they were lied to. Those are just a few of the examples.

Congress rightly didn't want to leave the students to be left holding the bag for the misconduct of the schools. So it created in 1992 this statutory borrower defense. No one had ever heard of it until 2014, when Corinthian Colleges collapsed and the lid was blown off of other for-profit colleges and universities' fraud. We are talking about the University of Phoenix and DeVry and others. If you look, you will find them, and it is a long list. There are two numbers you need to know about the for-profit colleges and universities, and this will be on the final. One number is 8: 8 percent of all postsecondary students go to for-profit colleges and universities—8 percent. The other is 33: 33 percent of all federal student loan defaults are students from for-profit colleges and universities. For the very reasons that we come to the floor today, these schools are notorious for misrepresenting to students, overcharging them in tuition, and providing them with little or no education for the future. These schools take the money and run, and the students are left holding the bag with massive debts.

Corinthian is a good example. It collapsed in 2014. Thousands of students were the victims of Corinthian's misrepresentations. They inflated job placement rates, took out loans for students without their knowledge, and lied to the students about employers recognizing their degrees. 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 the year 2015, nearly 300,000 student borrowers—mostly from for-profit colleges—have applied to the Department of Education for this discharge, and it is not going to stop. These for-profit colleges are the coronavirus of higher education. The Department of Education estimates that nearly 200,000 borrowers will be subject to further illegal practices by their schools in 2021 alone. This new DeVos rule is going to make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for students to find relief. The best estimate is that 3 percent of the students who are defrauded by their school will get relief, and the other 97 percent will not under this new rule that we will have a chance to vote against this afternoon.

The rule by Secretary DeVos makes it almost impossible for future defrauded borrowers to receive the borrower defense discharge that Congress intended. It eliminates all group relief. Each of the students is supposed to lawyer up. To prove their claims under the rule, the borrowers must provide evidence that the school intended to deceive them, had knowledge of the deception, or acted with reckless disregard.

How many students fresh out of school are able to make that legal proof? In addition, borrowers under the DeVos rule are required to show financial harm above and beyond the fact that they took out the loans that now burden them later in life.

This is a situation where we can respond as a Congress and should on a bipartisan basis. The House has already passed this measure saying that we reject this new Secretary Betsy DeVos rule when it comes to this mistreatment of students who were defrauded and have a debt as a result of it.

One of my Senate colleagues whom I respect very much yesterday used a car analogy to defend Secretary DeVos' rule. He 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.

That is what the Senator said. His point is that the students who were defrauded by the school, sold a lemon of an education, should go after the school and not the Department of Education—except that the DeVos rule allows the schools to prevent students from suing them. It eliminates a prohibition in current rules on the use of mandatory arbitration clauses and class actions.

Under the existing rule, students of Corinthian could have come together in a class action and ask for relief in a court of law directly from the school. Secretary DeVos eliminates that: Go on your own. Each one of you students stand up for yourself.

Is that fair? I don't think it is. It certainly isn't the kind of thing that we want to see in terms of justice for these students. The DeVos rule causes

the person who bought the lemon to be forced to sue the bank instead of the car dealer. You can't have it both ways.

It is not just me who believes that the DeVos rule is bad for student borrowers. A number of student, consumer, veteran, and other organizations are supporting this resolution to overturn the rule: the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the NAACP, Third Way, Bipartisan Policy Center Action, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and 20 different State attorneys general. But the groups I want to highlight as I close in these final 2 or 3 minutes are the veterans organizations.

Many of the students who have been defrauded are veterans. These men and women have served our country in uniform, and after serving they seek an education to provide a better life for themselves and their families, and they deserve it. We have story after story after story of veterans who signed up at these for-profit colleges. They were told the GI education benefits were all they needed, only to waste the entire benefits on a worthless degree and be forced to take tens of thousands of dollars of student debt on top of it.

That is why our effort in this vote in just 2 minutes on the floor of the Senate—our effort to overturn this rule—is supported by the American Legion, the Student Veterans of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the National Military Families Association, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, VetsFirst, Veterans for Common Sense, and Veterans Education Success.

James "Bill" Oxford is the national commander of the American Legion, and he wrote to me and said: "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.

He, the American Legion commander, calls the DeVos rule "fundamentally rigged against defrauded borrowers" and says that it "flagrantly denies defrauded veterans [fair and timely] decisions [on their claims]."

How many speeches do each of us give as Senators about how much we value our military and veterans? We have a chance to prove it in just 1 minute, because there will be a roll call. Are you going to stand up for these veterans and these students and are you going to say to Secretary DeVos you are headed the wrong way?

These students and these veterans have been defrauded. Give them a fighting chance to rebuild their lives. Don't make it next to impossible.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all time is expired.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

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. Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act, the clerk will report H.J. Res. 76.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 76) 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 read the joint resolution a third time.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

(Mr. LANKFORD assumed the Chair.)

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

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

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

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 70 Leg.]

YEAS—53

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Portman
Bennet	Harris	Reed
Blumenthal	Hassan	Rosen
Booker	Hawley	Schatz
Brown	Heinrich	Schumer
Cantwell	Hirono	Shaheen
Capito	Jones	Sinema
Cardin	Kaine	Smith
Carper	King	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	Murray	Young
Gardner	Peters	

NAYS—42

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

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Murphy	Warren
Klobuchar	Sanders	

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 76) passed.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S.J. Res. 56

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Calendar No. 439, S.J. Res. 56, be indefinitely postponed.

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, over the last several weeks, the world has watched closely as the coronavirus has spread from China to more than 100 countries around the world.

Since this rapid spread began—before cases were discovered in at least 35 States, including the District of Columbia—folks in my hometown of San Antonio were already providing top-notch care for Americans evacuated from Wuhan Province overseas with suspected exposure.

From the first evacuees from China to more than 120 passengers from the Diamond Princess cruise ship, to those who will soon arrive from the Grand Princess cruise ship, the dedicated healthcare professionals in San Antonio have been operating—have been hitting on all cylinders.

So far, Lackland Air Force Base has been used to quarantine 235 evacuees, with hundreds more to arrive in the coming days. I must say, they have done a good job of managing this rapidly evolving situation, but that is not to say there haven't been challenges.

A few weeks ago, I organized a meeting with officials from the city of San Antonio, including the mayor and two city council persons, as well as the Department of Health and Human Services and the Defense Department, to discuss the ongoing mission and any concerns the city might have. Anytime officials at every level of government

are working together—whether it is in response to a natural disaster or a public health emergency—coordination is key. You have to make sure everybody is operating on the same page and regularly sharing information—something that was a challenge in the beginning and remains a challenge today.

At one point, we were able to get everybody in the same room to discuss not only the response to the virus but the steps to be taken to protect the general public in the surrounding area. Of course, that work doesn't start and end at Lackland in San Antonio. Hospitals around the State are facing a great deal of pressure and uncertainty surrounding the virus and working to ensure that they are prepared to treat potential coronavirus patients without impacting their normal operations is an urgent concern.

Last week, I helped organize a conference call with the Texas Hospital Association and officials from Health and Human Services and the Texas Department of State Health Services to discuss some of the issues of concern to hospitals serving on the frontline all across our State. There have been a lot of news stories about the shortage of masks and personal protective equipment for healthcare workers and subsequent price gouging, and that is a big concern for these hospitals—many of which serve rural populations. As I told folks on that call, communication in these situations is critical. It seems so obvious, but it is not done unless you insist upon it. I was particularly glad to hear personally their concerns so we can make sure we are doing what is needed on our end in Washington, DC, to support them.

I appreciate Texas's incredible healthcare professionals who have been working to treat patients in their care and prevent the coronavirus from spreading to the general public. The city of San Antonio—I have to single out in particular—has been carrying the weight of the struggle for a number of weeks now, and it has come at quite a significant cost to city taxpayers. Fortunately, last week, the President signed an \$8.3 billion funding bill to support our Nation's response to the coronavirus. It will send vital funding for treating and preventing the spread of the virus, including the purchase of masks and personal protective equipment, as well as supporting the development of a vaccine.

The funding bill will also include money for State and local communities, including San Antonio, which have been at the forefront of the battle at home. That makes \$950 million available for reimbursement for the costs Texas and other States have incurred while monitoring and treating these individuals. It is a start in the process to repay San Antonio for the work they have done to help our Nation mitigate the impact of the coronavirus.

I appreciate Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY for including

this reimbursement funding in the legislation and working so closely with all of us to get the relief on the way as soon as possible.

Over the last couple of days, we have witnessed the ripple effect the coronavirus threat has had on the markets, and the next big question on everyone's mind is how this virus will impact the economy. Yesterday we had the opportunity to discuss potential options with President Trump, Vice President PENCE, and Secretary Mnuchin, and we are continuing to work to identify the best path forward.

Unfortunately, there doesn't yet seem to be a bipartisan effort to try to reach a consensus—something we need. One of our Democratic colleagues suggested that the best way to prevent economic damage is to stop the spread of the virus. I can't argue with that logic, but unless that Senator knows something the rest of us don't know, that is not exactly a productive use of our time. We know we need to stop the virus, but we also need to deal with the economic fallout as well.

When we were in a position in 2014 with the Ebola crisis, we didn't hear a lot of griping about what President Obama was doing. We found ways to work with him for the betterment of our communities in the country. So I hope that at a time when we are confronting this threat, we can work together. That includes the Speaker and the minority leader here, all of us together to try to solve this problem. It is not a time to play politics. It is a time for us to work together in the Nation's interest.

Keeping the American people safe and healthy and keeping our economy strong should be a shared bipartisan goal. I hope our colleagues—all of our colleagues—will keep that in mind, just as we did when we worked with President Obama in 2014.

While the American people are rightly taking precautions to protect themselves and their loved ones, it is important to remember there is no reason to panic. Preparation, yes; panic, no.

The leaders at the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Health and Human Services continue to remind all of us that the risk for the average American remains low, and the best defense against the virus is to use the same personal hygiene practices that our mother taught us when we were young. To help communicate what those practices are, as well as other information, my office has created a unique web page on my official website, cornyn.senate.gov. This will serve as a platform to provide information to all Texans who have questions about the virus and may be of interest to anybody who is concerned about what the government is doing to deal with the virus. If you are looking for information on how to prevent the spread of the virus, what Congress is doing to help, where you can find the latest number of cases in Texas, we have compiled all of the relevant links in one place.

I know I speak on behalf of all Texans when I thank the dedicated healthcare professionals around the State and around the Nation for providing the highest quality care for people who come down with the virus. I am grateful for everyone who is unified in this fight and who are working to stop the spread of the virus and, ultimately, develop a vaccine.

On one final note, let me say a word about my friend and colleague Senator CRUZ. Over the weekend, he announced he would self-quarantine after coming into contact with someone who was later determined to have the coronavirus. I want to thank him for having the courage to step forward and to do what any one of us should do if we are exposed to somebody with the coronavirus, if we know it: to monitor our health and make sure we don't spread it to others and to seek care from a healthcare professional should we begin to come down with worrisome symptoms.

His is a great reminder for all Americans to take this potential risk seriously and that we should all be joined together to do everything we can to keep our communities safe and healthy.

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

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

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my friend from Texas. I only heard part of them, but I appreciate his interest and what we need to do to deal with this coronavirus. I hear so often in this body that it is about the economic issues, which to be sure it is, as you know in Utah and Senator CORNYN knows. But when I hear the President's response on what to do—first, I know that people are angry in Ohio and I think elsewhere that the President has waited so long to act.

I know people are angry when they find out that the President made major cuts to the Centers for Disease Control, which the Presiding Officer knows is the best public health agency probably in the history of the world, combined with our public health departments at NIH and the FDA and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in Cincinnati—all of this incredible public health infrastructure safety net we have built in this country bipartisanship through decades and decades.

I know people are unhappy when they learn about the President eliminating the position at the White House of the admiral physician who ran our effort to always be trying to anticipate a public health outbreak, a pandemic of sorts. I

don't know whether or not we are in one. I don't think we know that.

I am not an alarmist or panicky in any way, but I know people realize we had such a late start on this because of the President's actions over the last 3 years.

The issue is not to bail out more corporations. The issue is not to give money to the cruise ship companies, for gosh sakes, which is one part of the President's rhetoric tweet proposals. The cruise ship industry is almost exclusively foreign-owned. Why take tax dollars and shovel them into the cruise industry?

Instead of focusing on large corporations, which is something the President always does—I understand that is what he comes from, who he is, and who his supporters are—instead of focusing there, we should be focusing on individuals, and that means starting with a sick leave policy and sick days.

Think about how hard it is for all of us in this body—think about somebody making \$12 an hour and living alone or living with a child or living with a spouse, whoever, making \$12 an hour with no benefits and they get sick. They think, let's see, do I go to work—if I go to work sick, I may get worse, and I may infect my colleagues and other employees—or do I stay home and give up that \$100 of a \$12-an-hour job? I am paying \$700 a month in rent. Can I give up that \$100 or \$200 or \$300 over 2 or 3 days?

There are so many Americans who are sick who wrestle with that decision every single day. This is an opportunity. Senator MURRAY worked on a bill. I worked on this bill with her for a good while. I just spoke with Congresswoman DELAURO from Connecticut about working on legislation to provide emergency relief right now. We can do this today. I know the Presiding Officer has been open-minded about things like this. We can make this bipartisan. We can have immediate 14-day help as part of our package that we already voted on and then have a long-term, 7-day sick day policy where you earn those benefits. As you work, you earn that—up to 7-day sick day policy. Every other industrialized, wealthy country in the world has it. It makes safer, healthier workplaces and safer, healthier workers. It will mean good help and stronger families—all the kinds of things a sick day policy would mean to our country.

I am hopeful that rather than shovel money to corporations, we will spend that money on individuals, on people, on workers and their workplace. It could make all the difference in the world, not just in addressing this coronavirus public health crisis today but in preventing these kinds of crises in the future.

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. GRASSLEY. 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. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for me, Senator COLLINS, and Senator CASSIDY to have a colloquy.

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

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, as most of my colleagues know, I hold a meeting in each of Iowa's 99 counties every year for Q&A with my constituents. Over the last couple of years, without fail, Iowans have brought up the skyrocketing prices of prescription drugs. People all over my State, including farmers, factory workers, and especially senior citizens, have raised the concern that pharmacy bills have been ballooning.

I will say, Iowans are always interested in hearing about solutions, and they are looking for solutions on this issue from Congress, but not a single one of these people who bring this issue up cares about the partisan politics of the issue. Iowans just want Congress to act. This is my 40th year of taking questions in our 99 counties—although, as of now, only 14. Rarely have I heard so much unanimity when it comes to this issue, but on prescription drug prices, it is unanimous. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike all want us to take action, and the data, both polling and otherwise, bears out our constituents' concerns.

As I highlighted last week, right here in this position on the Senate floor, a new study shows that pharmaceutical prices have increased 3½ times the rate of inflation in recent years. People are paying more than double what they paid in the year 2007 for drugs treating conditions from MS to diabetes and everything in between. The lack of transparency and the enormous subsidy incentives are driving these price hikes—perverse incentives that we have in law. If they were not intended to be perverse, they are incentives people have found out how to benefit from.

This is because the government's spigot is all the way open for the big pharmaceutical companies or—how we say it around here—Big Pharma. Of course, when this happens, taxpayers get ripped off. It happens because we pay a lot of money—I think about \$138 billion—for Medicare and Medicaid. We pay at least that much. So, when you have 5- to 10-percent increases on January 1, you can see willy-nilly, on the judgment of Big Pharma, that taxpayers are paying a heck of a lot more.

I know all of my colleagues want to do something about this, and I know the administration wants to do something about it. In fact, let me say to the administration that I have been involved in this as the chairman of this committee since just a year ago Janu-

ary. The administration has given a major speech, and the Secretary of HHS has taken major action going way back to June of 2018. So we all know that our colleagues and our administration know that something needs to be done.

We are fortunate that, just yesterday, the White House published five principles that the administration can get behind for reducing prescription drug costs. Our legislation in the Senate fits the bill, or the principles, that were laid out in that op-ed piece. The Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act is the name of our legislation, and it addresses those principles. More importantly, it is the only option that can get 60 votes in the U.S. Senate.

Many Americans are reading about the coronavirus issue. It scares our constituents. We don't know what kind of drugs might come into the market to help treat the disease. Senator CASSIDY, who will soon speak, is an expert on that. He can address those issues for anybody who wants them addressed. Yet, if our bill becomes law, we know that folks who are on Medicare will not face sticker shock at the drugstore counter. Not only is that important in its being a comforting thought in the short term, as we face the coronavirus, but it is important in the long term, when we inevitably encounter another novel outbreak.

It took a long time to hammer out the Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act. I thank Senator WYDEN for sticking it out with me and working in good faith for the benefit of all of our constituents so we could produce a bipartisan bill. His determination as well as the leadership of many of my colleagues, like Senators CASSIDY, COLLINS, and DAINES, have further improved the legislation. We have a bill. We have bipartisan support, and we have White House support. We also have the opportunity. The bottom line is, let's act.

I thank my colleagues for joining me in this effort.

I yield to my colleague Senator COLLINS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, first, I express my appreciation to the chairman of the Committee on Finance, Senator GRASSLEY, not only for his leadership but also for his persistence on an issue that affects so many Americans, and that is the soaring price of prescription drugs.

Three committees—the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, and the Committee on the Judiciary—have all advanced bipartisan legislation to reform our broken drug pricing system.

The Aging Committee, which I chair, has held eight drug pricing hearings which have highlighted the burden of soaring prices and the manipulation of the market by individuals like the infamous Martin Shkreli. It is now past time for us to move forward to the Senate floor to debate these bills that have

bipartisan support and that have garnered the approval of three major committees.

The Finance bill, which Senator GRASSLEY has crafted with Senator WYDEN and others and of which I am proud to be a cosponsor, makes crucial improvements to Medicare Part D, such as protecting seniors with an out-of-pocket spending cap as well as including cost control measures, such as an inflationary cap to limit pharmaceutical price hikes.

In one of the hearings that the Aging Committee held, I heard testimony that was heartbreaking from a former teacher with multiple myeloma who had to refinance her home in order to cover the cost of her \$250,000 cancer medication. We heard example after example.

I will never forget my standing in the pharmacy line in Bangor, ME, where I live, and ahead of me was a couple who had just been told that the couple's copay was \$111.

The husband turned to his wife and said: Honey, we just can't afford that.

They walked away—away from the medication that one of them needed.

I asked the pharmacist: How often does this happen?

He told me that it happens every day.

We have to take action. That experience led me to author legislation that became law that prohibited gag clauses that were preventing pharmacists from advising their patients, their customers, on whether or not there was a less expensive way to purchase their prescription drugs. I am proud to say that this legislation is now law, but there is much more that we need to do.

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, on which I serve, has incorporated more than 14 measures to increase price competition in its legislation on lowering healthcare costs. I know the Presiding Officer is a member of that committee as well. I am pleased to say that the bill includes major portions of the Biologic Patent Transparency Act, which is a bill that I authored with Senator TIM KAINE. It is intended to prevent drug manufacturers from gaming the patent system.

Now, patents are very important. They help to spur innovation, and that period of exclusivity encourages drug manufacturers to invest more into life-saving drugs. Yet the fact is, when the patent has expired, generics should be allowed to come to the market and drive down the costs. According to former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, if all of the biosimilars—those are generics for biologic drugs—that had been approved by the FDA had been successfully marketed in our country in a timely fashion, Americans would have saved more than \$4.5 billion in 2017.

A biosimilar version of HUMIRA, the world's best-selling drug, has been on the market in Europe for more than a year, while American patients must wait until 2023. We simply cannot allow

this kind of abuse of the patent system to continue.

The Judiciary Committee has also advanced proposals to empower the Federal Trade Commission to take more aggressive action against anti-competitive behaviors. Last month, the FTC charged the infamous Martin Shkreli with an anticompetitive scheme of setting an increase of more than 4,000 percent overnight for the lifesaving drug DARAPRIM. That was the focus of an investigation on the Aging Committee that I led with former Senator Claire McCaskill. I applaud the FTC for taking action, and we simply must give them more authority and the resources to pursue these kinds of anticompetitive cases that drive up the cost of prescription drugs.

Finally, I hope that we have the opportunity to debate other worthy proposals, including one that Senator SHAHEEN and I have introduced to lower the skyrocketing price of insulin.

I want to commend the administration for today releasing a new plan to drive down the cost of insulin for Medicare beneficiaries. The fact is, between 2012 and 2016, the average price of insulin nearly doubled. According to the Health Care Cost Institute, the price of an average 40-day supply of insulin rose from \$344 in 2012 to \$666 in 2016. There is no justification for that. Insulin was isolated nearly 100 years ago, and while there are different varieties of insulin, it is still insulin.

As cochairs of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, Senator SHAHEEN and I have introduced legislation which creates a new pricing model for insulin, and our bill would hold pharmacy benefit managers, pharmaceutical companies, and insurers accountable for surging insulin prices by incentivizing reductions in list prices.

For the most popular insulins, this would result in as much as a 75-percent decrease in prices on average. Whether you are insured or you are paying out of pocket, you would benefit from that significant decline in the price if you need insulin to control your diabetes.

Congress has a tremendous opportunity to deliver a decisive victory in both lowering healthcare costs and in improving healthcare for the people in my State of Maine and throughout our country.

Let's not delay any longer. We must act on prescription drug legislation without further delay. We have three committees that have produced bills, and I believe this should be a priority for this Chamber.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I am going to speak about the drug affordability act, what people in Washington call the Grassley-Wyden bill.

I am renaming that bill. I am going to rename that bill to what I call the "Making Coronavirus Medicines Affordable Act," and I want to address

drug affordability from the perspective of coronavirus and address it from the perspective of a physician.

First, people ask: How is this different than regular flu? Ten thousand people die a year from flu. Why is this so different from that?

Well, again, as a physician, let me speak to that. Each of us, however old we are, have been exposed to flu, either by the flu vaccine or a flu infection, as many years as we have been alive. So when someone is exposed to the flu, they have a whole kind of armamentarium of antibodies. When the flu virus comes into your body, those antibodies mobilize, and it is not an exact fit to block the effects of the flu virus, but it is a pretty good fit. So for an infection which otherwise might cause problems, the effect is blunted and the symptoms are either absent or minimized.

As it turns out, the flu virus kills the very young, who have never before been exposed to the flu virus before, or the very old, whose immune systems are no longer working as well. Even though they have been previously exposed, their body is more vulnerable.

Now, as for coronavirus, nobody's body has ever seen that before. For everyone, this is a brand-new infection, and there is not a library book of immunologic responses that enable us to fight back against this virus. For all of us, if you will, it is a sucker punch to our health. We turn around, and, boom, it hits us.

Now, in terms of who it can kill, again, it seems to cause problems in newborns—the very young—but it also causes problems not just in the very old but in the older but not so very old.

In China we have learned that if someone is over 50 and they have an underlying medical condition, they are at increased risk. If you are over 60, you are at even more risk. So unlike influenza, where typically the person who dies would be 75 or 85 and in a nursing home, in terms of coronavirus, it might be somebody with high blood pressure or diabetes, heart disease, cancer, or a lung disease, who is otherwise living life, walking around the streets. They get hit with this virus, and, all of a sudden, they have a problem.

Now, we are going to find a cure. Sooner or later, we will come up with medicines that help somebody who is infected get well. The question is, Will those medicines be available to you? That is what we need to be concerned about.

So what does it mean? Well, first there have been reports that both because of the infection raging through China and a decision by India, it is possible that some of these drugs will not be available.

In China, they make the raw ingredients that are shipped to India, and they make the medicines. Well, China is not producing as many of the raw ingredients, and India has put an embargo on the export of some of those drugs to the United States.

At least of the drugs they have embargoed that I saw a list of recently, none of those medicines are medicines that we think might ultimately help fight coronavirus. So even though we have a problem with supply chain, so far there is no evidence it will impact the ability of a medication, whenever it is discovered, to be available here in the United States.

But there is another issue. Can the senior citizen who is most vulnerable afford the medicine?

Let me put this up.

Under the current structure of Medicare Part D, the senior citizen—the personal Medicare Part D—pays a certain amount of money until they go into the so-called catastrophic coverage phase. Now, pharmaceutical manufacturers and pharmacy benefit managers manipulate that list price to more quickly move the senior citizen into her catastrophic phase, and when she is in her catastrophic phase of our Medicare Part D benefit, she must pay 5 percent of whatever is the price of that drug. Even—imagine this—if that drug costs \$1 million a year, she would have to pay 5 percent of it under the current structure of the Medicare Part D benefit.

I just posted a video on my Facebook page, and an oncology nurse, Kathy at East Jefferson General Hospital in New Orleans, was speaking about how this benefit design, where the senior has to pay 5 percent, no matter the cost, is so harmful in terms of her ability to get certain cancer drugs to cancer patients.

Now, imagine it is a coronavirus drug—a cure for coronavirus that we know is going to eventually be here, and it can be priced. You name the price; we are going to pay it. Or can we? Can someone afford 5 percent of \$100,000 or 5 percent of \$50,000? Is it imaginable that such a medication would be priced as such?

It is totally imaginable.

We need to enact what the chairman of the committee calls the Grassley-Wyden bill but which I call the “Making Coronavirus Drugs Affordable Act.”

What we would do with this bill is change the Part D benefit so that when a senior pays up to a certain amount, period, it is stopped. She or he pays no more. And no matter how much that coronavirus drug is priced, she or he will not pay above a certain amount.

If they price it at \$100,000, under current law you are paying 5 percent of that. Under this law, you would not. The out-of-pocket exposure, if you will, is capped. By the way, it also caps it for the taxpayer, which saves you and me as taxpayers—all of us as taxpayers—a heck of a lot of money as we attempt to balance the Federal budget and as we attempt to preserve the life of the Medicare Program.

So I will point out that we are going to have a cure for coronavirus sooner or later, but if a senior citizen or anyone cannot afford that cure, it is as if the cure had never been invented. We

need both for the cure to be invented and we also need for it to be affordable. Otherwise, it would not be available.

By the way, somebody may tell you they are supporting another bill either in the House of Representatives or here in the Senate. This is the only bill out there which is bipartisan. This is the only bill out there which has a chance to pass. This is the only bill that can protect senior citizens, not only by being good policy but by being signed into law by the President of the United States. The President of the United States has signaled that he, indeed, would sign this law.

Now, the “Making Coronavirus Drug Affordable Act” does other things as well. It caps out-of-pocket expenses. It lets patients pay over time. If they know they are going to have a big amount in January, they don’t have to pay it all in January. They can pay it a little bit in January, February, March, and all the way through the end of the year. It protects patients from price gouging, but it still preserves incentives for these cures to be invented.

As we look for a holistic response to the coronavirus infection, we must keep in mind that drugs have to be affordable. So I am asking all my fellow Senators to support the “Making Coronavirus Drugs Affordable Act,” also known as the Grassley-Wyden bill, and for Senator MCCONNELL to bring it to the floor.

With that, I introduce my colleague from Montana, STEVE DAINES, to continue this discussion.

Mr. DAINES. Senator CASSIDY, thank you—Dr. CASSIDY. It is a really good thing to have a physician serving on the floor of the U.S. Senate and your additional insight you have as a physician. Thank you.

Madam President, I am grateful for not only Senator CASSIDY’s leadership but also Senator GRASSLEY’s on this very important issue impacting millions of Montanans and Americans across our country.

I also want to thank my colleagues who spoke on this issue earlier today.

When I am back home in Montana, I hear the same concerns in virtually every corner of our State. Whether I am down in southeast Montana, in places like Ekalaka or Baker; or up in northeast Montana, in places like Westby and in places like Sidney and Plentywood; and if we go out to the northwest part of our State, to places like Eureka, Libby; or in southwest Montana, where I am from, in Bozeman, Belgrade, or anywhere you go, I am hearing that Montanans are concerned with the high cost of prescription drugs. That is why I have made it one of my top priorities in Congress and on the Senate Finance Committee to lower prescription drug costs for Montanans and for folks across the country.

Year after year, prescription drug out-of-pocket costs are reaching sky-high levels. They are impacting our seniors, our veterans, our families, and

our working men and women. It is truly heart-wrenching to hear the stories of folks who are rationing or even skipping doses of daily medications because they can’t afford the out-of-pocket costs. The American people are struggling under the burden of these out-of-control, high costs of prescription drugs, and they need relief.

That is why I am grateful to be working with Chairman GRASSLEY on the Finance Committee and my colleagues here today in a bipartisan fashion to lower costs, improve competition, and get our patients more bang for the buck. The complex drug pricing system has allowed Big Pharma and these pharmacy benefit managers—you may have seen the chart that Senator CASSIDY just laid out showing some of these complexities. These pharmacy benefit managers are the middle men responsible for negotiating drug prices, but in doing so, they take advantage of the secrecy of the pricing supply chain.

The bipartisan reforms we are fighting for and advocating for today would help fix the secrecy and save taxpayers more than \$80 billion. These reforms will cap out-of-pocket costs in Medicare, providing our seniors with enhanced financial security. One of the great sources of anxiety for our seniors is financial security. When you think about it, their financial situation could be devastated with the out-of-pocket costs for a single prescription drug.

Our efforts would reform the payment incentives and ensure that Big Pharma and the pharmacy benefit managers have more skin in this game. These reforms are the product of over 1 year of bipartisan negotiations. Although this may not be what you hear on the news, bipartisan compromise is not dead. I am pleased to see my colleagues putting politics aside and doing what is right for this country. Lowering costs is more than just figures and numbers and spreadsheets. This is about keeping our families healthy without having to worry about how much it is going to cost or if they can even afford it. This is about getting relief for the retiree who has worked and saved their entire life only to see the dollars they earned go down the drain because of the high cost of prescription drugs.

President Trump is ready to sign prescription drug reform. He is committed to getting this done on behalf of the American people. He hears it when he travels around the country. With strong support from this administration, I am confident we can achieve some major reforms for the American people. Montanans and Americans across the country want to see reform, and that is why I am standing here today, fighting for it.

Let’s move past the congressional gridlock and get this done. We had a good, strong, bipartisan vote out of the Senate Finance Committee, which will allow us to take a vote here on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Truly, Republicans, Democrats, and Independents

can deliver a historic victory for the American people, and I will continue working to get this bill on President Trump's desk.

I yield the floor.

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

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, with spring approaching, the days are getting longer and temperatures are warming up. Many are hitting the gym, trying to get that summer bod before heading to the beach, including some turtles. That is right, your tax dollars actually paid for a study that put turtles on treadmills.

So here we have our turtles on a treadmill. To no one's surprise, it turns out that turtles are really, really slow. OK. That is what our tax dollars went to. In fact, this wasteful study found that turtles moved at nearly the same pace as dead turtles on a treadmill. Aren't you glad that Washington bureaucrats used your hard-earned dollars to conduct this study? Good grief, folks.

How many of your tax dollars went to this study, exactly? Well, folks, your guess is actually as good as mine because there is no legal obligation for most Federal agencies to publicly disclose the price of government projects, even though the American taxpayers are paying for them. Folks, this is your money—your money. Shouldn't you have a right to know how it is being spent?

It has been said before, and I surely believe it: Government functions best when it operates in the open. This is the basis of Sunshine Week, which begins this Sunday. Sunshine Week is celebrated every year in March to remind us of just how important it is to have government transparency, especially when it comes to how our tax dollars are being spent.

Transparency really is fundamental to the principles upon which our Nation was founded. The people have power to affect the decisions made by those of us who are elected leaders, and, in turn, Congress has the authority to hold accountable the millions of unelected Washington bureaucrats who ultimately write the rules and regulations that impact nearly every aspect of our lives and decide how our taxpayer dollars are spent.

This year, I have a couple of bright ideas to shine some light on how Washington is spending your money. Let's talk about those darn government boondoggles—those Federal projects that are billions of dollars over budget and years behind schedule. Frankly, we know nothing about them because the government agencies aren't required to report this information to you.

Well, I have a bill to help shed some light on these costly monstrosities. My Billion Dollar Boondoggle Act would require an annual report listing every single taxpayer-funded project that is

\$1 billion or more over budget or 5 years or more behind schedule. This will make it impossible for Washington bureaucrats to continue throwing our tax dollars into bottomless money pits without being noticed.

Unfortunately, it is not just the billions wasted on boondoggles being kept secret. It is the cost of the Federal projects. So I have proposed a bill that requires every project supported with Federal funds to include a pricetag with the amount that is paid by taxpayers. That way, when your money is being spent to put turtles on a treadmill—the ones I mentioned to you earlier—you, the taxpayer, can decide if the price is right.

Of course, the waste doesn't stop there. Did you know that Federal agencies spend over \$1.4 billion every year on advertising and public relations? This includes—you will love this—more than a quarter of a million dollars for costumed mascots like Sammy Soil and Milkshake the cow—a quarter of a million dollars. There was nearly \$10,000 to produce a zombie apocalypse survival guide. Yes, folks, I am not joking. And there was \$30,000 for a martian New Year's Eve party and hundreds of thousands of dollars on tote bags, stress balls, fidget spinners, and other trinkets.

Well, folks, thankfully, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee is voting today on my bill, which forces agencies to disclose exactly how much they are spending on all of these government gimmicks. Folks, it is time we bag the swag and end this unnecessary taxpayer-funded propaganda.

With our national debt now exceeding \$23 trillion, there is literally no better time than Sunshine Week to start shedding more light on how Washington is managing or maybe, in this case, mismanaging your money. The only reason to keep taxpayers in the dark is that these spending decisions can't withstand the scrutiny. And, folks, that is exactly why sunlight is the best disinfectant.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, there are a lot of things going on right now in DC and a lot of moving targets. A lot of Americans are looking closely at what is happening with the COVID-19 virus. We are tracking what is happening overseas in Afghanistan and multiple other issues on the stock market, as well as what is happening with oil and gas right now.

We are spending a little bit of time, in the middle of all those things, to also say that we can't lose track of structural issues in government, to see if we can work on those issues that are, right now, in front of us, but we also have to look at long-term issues, to look at basic government transparency and basic accountability for government.

So I want to highlight—several of my colleagues are here, as well, high-

lighting some of the things that are actually on the floor or have moved recently or we think we can move on those. One of those things is the GREAT Act. This is a bipartisan bill that deals with basic transparency for grants.

If you go back 20 years ago, the Federal Government gave away very few grants. Now, \$600 billion a year is just for grants. My colleague, JONI ERNST from Iowa, just highlighted some of those wasteful grants that are out there that, as we go through them, we say we can try to get those one at a time or we can try to get a system in place where all grants have to go through a centralized data system where we can actually all look at the data and compare it across the government to basically look for areas of inefficiency. That is what the GREAT Act does. It creates standard data elements so that we can look at how the money is being spent—America's money—so we can actually evaluate it. That has overwhelmingly already passed. We are grateful to get that done this year.

Another one we were able to get done this year that has passed the Senate but has not yet passed the House is providing accountability through transparency. Now, this may seem super simple, but let me just begin with the most basic principle. No small business owner in America gets up every day and reads the Federal Register. It just doesn't happen anywhere.

If you are running a small business, you are running your small business. You are not getting up every day and reading the Federal Register to see the latest regulation. Even if you did, with the pages and pages and pages of regulations there, you can't make sense of it. This basic providing of accountability through transparency asks a simple question: Can we force the agencies, when they actually do a new regulation, to condense it down to 100 words or less in plain English so that you can actually figure out what this regulation is trying to do, so when you see a regulation come out, you can actually understand it without having to hire an attorney to go interpret it for you?

That has overwhelmingly already passed the Senate, and we are waiting for that to pass the House, as well—basic simplification of some of the government entities, in trying to be able to help out.

We passed by a majority—and it has already been signed into law—the one dealing with representative payee fraud. Now, again, this was a simple piece that was just needed in government. We discovered that if someone is a trustee for a Federal retiree for their retirement account and, as a trustee, they stole the money out of that person's account, we couldn't actually enforce the law on them. We could in several other areas, if it was Social Security or if it was disability, but we couldn't on Federal retirees.

So we were able to get a bipartisan agreement to pass this to take care of

that. It was a very simple bill, but it is the way we need to react when we see a problem—to actually go to solve that problem rather than take forever to do it.

Speaking of “forever” to be able to solve it, what I think is the most basic government transparency piece we can put out there to force real dialogue on budget issues is a simple bill we have on shutdown prevention. If we can end government shutdowns, we can actually have more debate on budget issues here in this room, where it should occur, and take the pressure off of Federal workers and Federal families facing a shutdown and furloughs.

MAGGIE HASSAN and I have a very simple bill. The bill simply says: If we get to the end of the fiscal year and if we don’t have all the issues resolved on our budget, we continue debating those things here. We remain in session 7 days a week until it is actually resolved. But in the meantime, Federal workers and their families are unaffected because the budget automatically continues at last year’s budget level until we get things resolved here. But in the meantime, we can’t go home until we actually solve that problem.

It is a straightforward solution to say: We are not going to have government shutdowns. We are not going to have chaos across the whole country. We have had 21 government shutdowns in 40 years. We have to stop that chaos.

So it stops that chaos, and it puts the pressure where the pressure needs to be—on us. When we finish our work, then we can move to the next thing. But if the budget work is not done, the most basic elements of those appropriations bills, if they are not finished, we remain in session 7 days a week until they are finished.

We need to find ways to be more efficient as a government. Government shutdowns waste money by the billions. ROB PORTMAN and his team did a remarkable study to look and see how much money was wasted in the last shutdown, and it was in the billions of dollars, and not even every agency turned in all their information to ROB PORTMAN and his team.

We can’t keep losing money that way. We can’t keep that chaos going for all the Federal workers and their families. We should have arguments about the budget. We have big ones that need to be resolved, but we should keep it here.

So, this week, as we pause for just a moment on all the other big issues that are pressing on us right now, I am grateful that we are also pausing for a moment to say: What are the big issues that we should look long term on, and how do we solve some of those issues for the future, as well, to make government more efficient and try to make government more transparent?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am here to join my colleagues in speaking

on the floor in advance of government Sunshine Week, but before I do that, let me commend my colleague from Oklahoma for his comments about the need for more transparency in government and particularly our grantmaking process.

We have made some progress on that—most recently, the DATA Act. His predecessor in Congress, Tom Coburn, worked on this issue, and we came up with legislation when I was on the other side of Pennsylvania Avenue at the Office of Management and Budget to put all grants and contracts online, which was a start. But the DATA Act takes that to the next level to make sure there is uniformity in government.

We still have difficulty with some agencies getting information out there, but he is absolutely right. It would make a difference because if people know how the money is being spent, it is much more likely to be spent wisely, all the way down to the ZIP Code in terms of where grants are going and what kind of Federal taxpayer dollars are being spent in our communities and whether it is being spent well.

Government shutdowns, of course—I couldn’t agree more with my colleague—have not worked to help make our government more efficient. In fact, we always spend more after the fact.

Think about it. People were furloughed, and, then, when they went back to work, they got backpay. Well, it would have been much better had they been there to provide the services to the taxpayers.

You also just have a lot of dislocation that is unfair and people who have to go to work who are essential employees. Think of our TSA employees—for those of you who travel in airports—not getting paid. A lot of them had car payments or house payments they couldn’t make during the last government shutdown. It is just unfair. So we have to get at that.

We have legislation that actually two-thirds of the Members of this side of the aisle have supported. Yet we have not been able to make that bipartisan. So I appreciate the fact that my colleague from Oklahoma has a bipartisan approach to that. We have tried for four or five Congresses now to pass legislation that simply says that at the end of the fiscal year, if you haven’t completed all the bills, then the government continues to operate, but 1 percent of spending is cut every 120 days, and every 90 days thereafter to give the Appropriations Committees here the incentive to get to work and to get the budget bills done. That, I think, would work.

It used to be a bipartisan approach. It is not now. So I am interested in looking at other options, including what the Senator from Oklahoma was talking about in terms of providing more pressure on us here to get our work done because these shutdowns clearly haven’t worked to help make the government more efficient. They have just had the opposite impact.

GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today there is a discussion about transparency. I am going to talk about one that is maybe going to surprise some people, but it is about the lack of transparency and about \$150 billion a year that is taxpayer money that is put into research and development. It is money that we, as taxpayers, pay to places like the National Institutes of Health. The National Institutes of Health does great research. So the Federal dollars go in there to try to develop cures—as an example, for diseases, but also for other healthcare research. There is the National Science Foundation, which does a lot of research on technology and research, and the Department of Energy, which does a lot of the basic research on science in our country. So I am going to focus on that funding today and a specific problem we have right now. It is about ensuring the government remains accountable to taxpayers. It is about ensuring that hard-working American taxpayers know where their money is going, and it is about a specific issue of that money going to research that is then taken by other countries, particularly by China, and the need for us to address that issue, in part, through transparency and, in part, through actually some new criminal statutes to be able to ensure that there is accountability.

Last fall, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations did a study. It was about a yearlong study. We looked at this issue of China’s talent recruitment programs and, more broadly, other countries, but, specifically, what China has been doing to find researchers over here in the United States whom they think are doing interesting work and recruiting those people to be able to provide that research and sometimes to have the person actually go to China to provide that research.

The issue we focused on in our report was this theft of intellectual property at research institutions and at our colleges and universities. It was a shocking report. We issued it late last year. It showed, as you probably know now from some of the press accounts that have arisen since then, that, in fact, China was recruiting individuals who were giving up their research that was taxpayer funded.

China has made no secret of its goal to surpass the United States to be the world leader in scientific research, but that doesn’t mean they should use our research institutions here in America, paid for by us, to accomplish that goal. These talent recruitment programs—most notably, the Thousand Talents Program—recruits researchers at American universities and American research institutions to do the same research, usually at shadow labs in China, in order to just transfer taxpayer-funded research back to China.

This is an issue that has been going on for two decades, we found out, and

really kind of right under the nose of the FBI and others. The FBI testified at our hearing and said they readily acknowledge that they were asleep at the switch, essentially, that they had not been on top of it, and they have only recently begun to focus on it.

We have seen the results of that, by the way. Little was done to stop it, but, recently, there has been a lot of publicity. You probably know about the recent arrest of Dr. Charles Lieber at Harvard University. Dr. Lieber actually lied to Federal investigators about his participation in the plan, and that is what they have charged him with.

Most recently, today, we heard about another one, Dr. James Lewis at West Virginia University, who pleaded guilty to fraudulently requesting time off to raise a newborn, when he was actually in China conducting research as part of his agreement with this same group, the Thousand Talents Plan. Now, this is a definite conflict of interest.

As an example, Professor Lieber is accused of accepting \$50,000 a month from the Chinese talent recruitment program and, also, \$150,000 in funding just for his expenses—now, remember, he is already being paid by Harvard—but also accepting \$1.5 million to set up a shadow lab in China. He did not tell his employer, Harvard, about this. Again, he was not honest when talking to the Federal prosecutors, which is how he came to be charged. So the fraud that he was committing was not the charge because that is not a criminal offense. It needs to be one.

With regard to the guy from West Virginia who just pleaded guilty yesterday, we don't know all the details yet there, but we know that this, again, is research that was being done, we assume partly funded by taxpayers, and this talent recruitment program was able to get that research.

So this can lead, obviously, to a real problem because it is helping to fuel not just the Chinese economy but also the Chinese military. Some of Professor Lieber's research, apparently, was done for our military, and, therefore, they got military research and, we assume, military secrets as well.

So they provide a reputational risk to the universities we are talking about, of course, and so many others around the country. But it is also just unfair to taxpayers, because this is government funded for the benefit of America, not to one of our stiffest global competitors.

So we are working with the Trump administration to ensure that we know where that taxpayer money is going and making sure it is going to benefit the United States of America.

Along with my counterpart on the subcommittee on the Democratic side of the aisle, TOM CARPER from Delaware, we plan to introduce bipartisan legislation that uses the key findings in our subcommittee report to ensure that our research enterprise is protected here in this country and also to

ensure that it continues to be open and transparent and accountable but also secure. Our legislation does this in a few ways, and a lot of it has to do with more transparency.

First, it creates a new cross-government council at the Office of Management and Budget to coordinate and streamline the grant-making process between Federal agencies so we know where the money is going and how it is being used.

Right now, these agencies don't talk to each other, and we don't know much about the grant-making process. We need to make that transparent. Sunshine, I think, will be a very effective disinfectant here.

Second, the bill makes it illegal to not tell the truth on a grant application. Apparently, that happens all the time now. We requested some of these grant applications from the Thousand Talents Program. We weren't able to get all the information we wanted, but we got enough to know that most of these contracts, apparently, have the individuals saying: OK, I will accept this money from the Chinese Government through this program, but I will not tell my employer about it. On the grant application, they have to say that they will not reveal it. Obviously, that is defrauding the U.S. Government.

The third part of our legislation closes the loopholes exploited by China and other countries and empowers the U.S. State Department to deny visas to foreign researchers who seek to exploit the openness of our U.S. research enterprise to steal intellectual property and research from our universities and research institutions.

Now, this is something that the State Department has worked with us on and has asked for. They are looking for additional authority from us. When they know somebody is not here on a good-faith effort to do research but, rather, to take our research, they want to be able to act.

Fourth, it requires research institutions and universities to have basic safeguards against unauthorized access to sensitive technology. You would think that is already in place, but, apparently, it is not. Also, it requires them to tell the State Department what technologies a foreign researcher will have access to on campus, so, again, we can start talking to each other, including folks at the State Department, law enforcement folks, and people in our research institutions.

Fifth, it directs the U.S. Government to work with our critical research partners—think of Japan or Australia or the UK—to protect their research enterprises from Chinese theft as well. We are not interested in having U.S. taxpayer dollars go to do research here on which we then collaborate with a foreign government, an ally, and then that research is taken back to China or other countries. So we want more information about working with partners, as well, to protect that important research.

And, finally, it requires colleges and universities to report any gifts of \$50,000 or more and empowers the Department of Education to fine universities that repeatedly fail to disclose these gifts. Current law requires reporting at the level of \$250,000. So if you get \$250,000 from a foreign entity, you are supposed to report it. In our study we found, shockingly, that 70 percent of U.S. universities consistently failed to do that. So the universities don't want to report the fact that they are getting money from foreign governments, but we need to know that. The taxpayers need to know that.

Lowering the threshold from \$250,000 to \$50,000 and increasing this transparency, including adding the penalty, ensures that those schools will report. In my view, that will lead to accountability and what we are looking for, which is more information.

Beyond these provisions, we are all going to have to do more to protect the U.S. research enterprise. My bill makes it clear that research institutions receiving taxpayer dollars have to do a better job giving the government just basic information about foreign researchers they partner with.

By the way, academics tend to agree. On Monday, the President of the American Council on Education in an op-ed agreed with our report's recommendation that research institutions should establish a "know your collaborator" culture—know whom you are collaborating with, know what their background is.

Providing basic information about researchers and what they will have access to on campus allows the State Department to properly vet foreign researchers before issuing them a visa. Frankly, it is hard to believe that universities aren't already required to tell the U.S. State Department this information, but they aren't.

A few universities and academic groups have raised concerns about the administrative burdens. We don't want to unnecessarily burden any research institution, university, or college, but we do want the transparency.

It is my hope that our research institutions will step up and do their part as patriots to help us ensure that our taxpayer-funded research does not fall into the wrong hands. Research universities need to take a hard look at what is happening on their own campuses. This threat is very real. If universities expect to continue to receive billions in taxpayer research dollars, Congress has to ensure the academic community is taking basic, commonsense steps to secure the research. I believe our legislation is a balanced way to ensure that will happen.

We talked earlier about the actions by college professors who have now been in the media. They have been charged by the FBI and others. One thing we do in this legislation, as well, is that we establish a new criminal law with regard to defrauding a university or defrauding the U.S. taxpayer.

Again, the reason these charges that we talked about earlier were able to be brought is not because of the fraud that was committed but because, in one case, someone lied about the reason they were looking for leave, and, in the other case, someone lied to the FBI about whether they were involved in the program or not. So these were perjury issues, really, not in terms of the fraud. Our legislation also tightens that up.

I think we all agree that the relationship we have with China is complicated. There is some good, and there is some bad. In my view, it is in both of our countries' interests to have a healthy relationship and have an exchange of new ideas and have the ability to collaborate where appropriate, but we cannot allow this continued theft of taxpayer-funded research.

My hope is that this legislation will send a firm but fair signal to China to change their behavior, respect our laws when it comes to research, and see the wisdom of our research values here in the United States of openness, transparency, reciprocity, integrity, and, most importantly, merit-based competition.

I encourage my colleagues to take a look at that legislation. We hope to introduce it the week after next, when we are back from recess. We believe that this legislation will be incredibly important to ensure that we can protect this research that taxpayer dollars are funding.

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

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

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues in offering support for improving the way our government runs. What we are doing is we are fighting for a government that is led in an open, transparent way by elected leaders—elected leaders—who are accountable to the people who elect us.

Reining in a bureaucracy that has run rampant has been a top priority of mine ever since coming to Congress. In fact, last year when I outlined my vision for serving in the Senate in my maiden speech, I vowed to take on the bureaucracy. Since coming to Washington, it has become abundantly clear to me that the bureaucracy has evolved into an unelected, unaccountable creature.

When constituents back home reach out to my office for help, there is a good chance it has to do with an intransigent, unresponsive, or even an aggressive—an aggressive—confrontational bureaucrat who has forgotten that a public servant is actually supposed to serve the public; that

is, the public made up of people—people who elect officials.

In many cases, the Federal Government has codified the corruption, transforming from a group of civil servants carrying out our laws into a rogue body consumed with defending and in many cases expanding their power. This bureaucracy has turned internal guidance documents into infallible law, placing the creation and implementation of their policies and processes above the American people's needs—in fact, in many cases, changing the actual laws they are supposed to be enforcing. This is something I look to address at every given opportunity because it is a problem I discover in almost every issue we seek to solve.

I am going to start by talking a little bit about the Army Corps of Engineers. My efforts to take on this bureaucracy began almost immediately when I came to the Senate. President Trump, in fulfilling his promise to secure our border and keep America safe, declared a national emergency in order to expedite the construction of physical barriers along our southern border. Unfortunately, the agency charged with executing the building of this wall—that is, the Army Corps of Engineers—is not known for expediency or responsiveness.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee and the Environment and Public Works Committee, both of which have direct jurisdiction over the Corps of Engineers, I exercised my congressional oversight responsibilities and role by conducting a study of the Army Corps' procurement process: how it awards contracts, how those companies have performed since being selected, what they are paid for in their bidding or RFP process. My findings, simply, were horrifying.

In a letter to President Trump, I detailed how the Corps' procurement process fails to foster competition—particularly when it comes to price and schedule—and disfavors new entrants and innovators into their process.

As I was conducting the investigation that led to these findings, I was met with bureaucratic obstruction at almost every step, from bad-faith promises, to empty vows of cooperation, to bureaucrats actually leaking my personal—my personal—emails to the media. Army Corps bureaucrats failed to meet even the most basic standards of good faith and cooperation in dealing with a Senator who sits on the committees that oversee them, as though their agency runs us instead of our having oversight over them. The correspondence they leaked was not even salacious or informative, really. It said nothing that I wasn't already saying out loud. But I think that was what bothered them the most, is that I was saying it out loud. This was a coordinated attempt to discourage me from continuing to dig into the bureaucracy. As I told them then, if you are counting on 99 out of 100 people to walk away exasperated because of your delays, consider me the other 1.

Such intimidation and such a breakdown in proper government action should be infuriating and horrifying to any civically minded person who believes in checks and balances and the ability to hold the bureaucracy accountable.

It is not my first encounter with bureaucratic overreach, with an executive agency dipping its foot into the water of activism. During my time in the House of Representatives under the previous administration, the conservation advocacy group Ducks Unlimited was providing staff to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, embedded right in their offices. This meant that taxpayer funds were supporting the work of advocacy staffers campaigning for a State ballot measure to establish a slush fund that would benefit their organization. The Federal Government was funding political activists while those activists worked to pass a measure that would give them further funding. If that is not corruption, then nothing is, whether or not it is intended. If not for our efforts to shine light on such obvious corruption, their abuse would have gone unchecked, and their power would have only grown.

Somehow, the issue with the Natural Resources Conservation Service is not the most obvious example of bureaucratic abuse that North Dakotans have experienced. Over the years, the Fish and Wildlife Service has increasingly encroached on the rights of landowners who have perpetual wetland easements on their property.

One particularly egregious case is the story of Mike Johansen, a farmer from Hope, ND. After a heavy rainfall year, the land flooded, leaving him unable to harvest and seed for the next planting season. He asked the Service for help, but due to poor guidance and enforcement, the Service offered him nothing. In fact, after he dug a drain, the Service cited him and dragged him to court. The legal fees and fines caused by these vague regulations written without clarity, oversight, or an appeals process forced Mike to quit farming, sell his equipment, and borrow money just to get the funds he needed to defend himself in court against his government. Thankfully, he won in court. He proved his case against the government. But the cost was bankruptcy—bankruptcy.

I had the privilege of hosting Interior Secretary Bernhardt so he could meet with Mike and North Dakota landowners who have experienced similar abuse. Since then, the Interior Department has begun issuing updated guidance to give our landowners clarity and a right to appeal overzealous bureaucratic action.

I appreciate the Secretary's timely action and his emphasis on being a better neighbor, but this will only be successful if Fish and Wildlife Service employees follow the spirit of the Secretary's actions to actually work with

landowners versus ruling over them. We are working closely with the Department to make sure these regulations work for our constituents, and I am hopeful this example concludes with a positive ending. But after every election, there is a new set of leaders.

Frankly, I have been appalled at the reaction the bureaucracy has had to the Trump administration's moving of the Bureau of Land Management from Washington, DC, to Grand Junction, CO, or a couple of USDA agencies moving from Washington, DC, to Kansas City, only so they can be closer to the resources they manage and the people they are supposed to be serving. The backlash has been incredible; the outcry, unbelievable. It is as though the bureaucracy is entitled to whatever they think is important as opposed to the people they work for being entitled to good service.

Sadly, there is one glaring example to me that is far from reaching a conclusion or a positive ending anytime soon, although I will never give up. I will never give up.

Over 50 years ago, during the Vietnam war, the USS *Frank E. Evans* battleship collided with an allied aircraft carrier and sank, killing 74 deployed sailors. The USS *Frank E. Evans* had served multiple tours off the Vietnam coast and was scheduled to return after completing this exercise about 100 miles outside of the official combat zone. They were exercising with other American ships, as well as other allied ships, during the Vietnam war. Because of a geographic technicality, the names of those "Lost 74" sailors are not memorialized on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall, as if they didn't die in the service of our Nation's effort in Vietnam. The honor and gratitude owed to them is long overdue, but the only objections I have ever heard—remember, this was just about 51 years ago now—the only objections I have ever heard are from the people whose job it would be to add their names to the wall. In other words, I can't find anybody who opposes adding the 74 names to the wall except the people whose job it would be to carry out this task. We are working on sending a man to Mars, but somehow it is too much to add 74 heroes' names to the Vietnam Memorial wall.

It is inexplicable to me that bureaucrats in Washington could determine that these sailors' ultimate sacrifice is unworthy of being memorialized simply because they were on the wrong side of an arbitrary line. The exclusion of these veterans is a disservice to those who gave their lives for our country. A technicality is not an excuse for inaction, a previously issued memo is not a reason to express disapproval, and an objection from Washington's bureaucracy should not stop us from honoring these heroes, these veterans.

Last year, a bipartisan group of senators introduced a bill to force the bureaucracy to make this a reality. Yet it remains stuck here in the Senate.

Let me repeat that. The bureaucracy's excuses have found welcoming ears here, and the bill remains stuck, with no explanation or reasoning. It has equal bipartisan support. Yet it remains stuck in the bureaucracy of this body.

If we do not see movement soon, I am going to return to the Senate floor to attempt to pass the bill by unanimous consent. I have spoken to the chairmen of the two committees of jurisdiction. They see no objection. Yet, somewhere in this big place, objection clearly exists.

I hope that between now and then, we are able to see real progress on this important issue. The people fighting to have these fallen soldiers memorialized are also heroes. They are their shipmates. They are the survivors, the spouses, and the children of these heroes. I am not going to join the bureaucracy by standing in the way, and I hope none of my colleagues do either.

These are just a few of the many examples of what I call bureaucratic abuse, obstruction, and overreach that I have witnessed since coming to Congress just 7 years ago, and I think we should call them out. The opinion of Federal career staff is not sacrosanct; it is advice. It is counsel, but it is not a decision.

Without further action, complacency will only empower the bureaucracy. People elected us to have their power, the people's power. So now is the time to remind this city who holds that constitutional responsibility and authority. The people hold it. Our constituents elected us, the President, and every elected official, but they have no say in the bureaucracy except through us. That is our job as elected officials—to give the people we work for their voice in the bureaucracy. We must dedicate ourselves to doing so, so that we can define this era as a time that we, the elected representatives, stood up to the bureaucracy and reclaimed the true power of the Federal Government for the people, not the bureaucracy.

With that, I yield my time.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise today for "Time to Wake Up" speech No. 258 and my increasingly battered chart here to urge colleagues in the Senate to wake up and see the looming danger we face from climate change.

Just look at the recent climate effects in our Southern Hemisphere. The

most devastating wildfires anyone can remember have ripped across Australia, burned more than a fifth of Australia's forests, destroying thousands of homes, killing an estimated 1 billion animals, and making a day of breathing air in Sydney like smoking 37 cigarettes. In the ocean off Australia, there are new warnings that the Great Barrier Reef—a Wonder of the World visible from space—is doomed.

The warmest temperatures ever were recorded in Antarctica—a 70-degree day when the average February temperature would be 33 degrees.

Here is the Thwaites Glacier. Here on Antarctica's Thwaites Glacier, scientists drilled through 2,000 feet of ice, down to the ocean water below, and discovered water 2 degrees above freezing. With 70 degrees above and 2 degrees above, it is a melting sandwich. Losing that glacier would trigger almost 3 feet of sea level rise, and that glacier is going.

Sea level rise brings me to the crash warnings that are the subject of this speech, crash warnings that are flashing throughout the economy. Sea level rise connects to these crash warnings because some of these crash warnings revolve around sea level rise in its crashing coastal property values. Other warnings are of a crash in what economists call the carbon bubble.

I have a binder of these warnings that I put together, and I sent this binder to every Member of the Senate in February of 2019. Every Senator has all of the warnings that are compiled in that binder. I have a letter, too, that follows up on the warnings in that binder—just about the warnings that have emerged since February of 2019—in fact, mostly just from this year. I sent this letter to all of the members of the Senate Banking Committee because the economic crashes that are warned of are within the Senate Banking Committee's jurisdiction, and that committee has the responsibility to be the distant early warning system for the rest of us in the Senate about these warnings.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, dated February 6, 2020.

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

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, February 6, 2020.

Hon. MIKE CRAPO,

Chairman, Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. SHERROD BROWN,

Ranking Member, Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CRAPO AND RANKING MEMBER BROWN: With the impeachment procedure behind us, we return to regular work, and I write to bring your attention to further financial warnings related to the climate crisis.

You will recall that I wrote to you on December 2, 2019 about climate-related warnings emanating from the financial and regulatory community. The two lead warnings were of a coastal property value crash (which Freddie Mac has warned could be worse than the 2008 mortgage meltdown), and a carbon asset bubble crash (described by U.K. financial regulator the Bank of England as a “systemic risk”—meaning the crash could cascade beyond fossil fuel companies out into the global economy). A copy of that letter is attached for you as a reference.

The warnings continue.

The Bank for International Settlements, described sometimes as the bank of the central banks, has published a report, “The Green Swan: Central banking and financial stability in the age of climate change.” This report recognizes and reinforces the many previous warnings that “[c]limate change could . . . be the cause of the next systemic financial crisis” (p. 1), and that “[c]entral banks, regulators and supervisors have increasingly recognised that climate change is a source of major systemic financial risks” (p. 65, emphasis added), indeed that “climate catastrophes are even more serious than most systemic financial crises.” (p. 3)

The “Green Swan” report goes on to describe the stunning scale of these risks: that “[e]xceeding climate tipping points could lead to catastrophic and irreversible impacts that would make quantifying financial damages impossible.” (p. 1, emphasis added; in an odd coincidence, that language mirrors President Trump’s 2009 warning in a *New York Times* ad that climate change consequences would be “catastrophic and irreversible.”)

The “Green Swan” report warns that this risk is so extreme because the risk is dual, and so dangerous because it is so unpredictable: “The complex chain reactions and cascade effects associated with both physical and transition risks could generate fundamentally unpredictable environmental, geopolitical, social and economic dynamics.” (p. 3, emphasis added). Like the “black swans” from which this report derives its title, “both physical and transition risks are characterised by deep uncertainty and non-linearity, their chances of occurrence are not reflected in past data, and the possibility of extreme values cannot be ruled out.” (p. 3, emphasis added).

The “Green Swan” report warns that this dangerously unpredictable risk can put our financial stability in danger, citing “growing awareness” that these “physical and transition risks . . . would affect the stability of the financial sector.” (p. 65); and could be irremediable by ordinary methods. The impact could be so great as to “make quantifying financial damages impossible,” (p. 1), the effects would be “catastrophic and irreversible” (p. 1), and these “climate-related risks will remain largely unhedgeable as long as system-wide action is not undertaken.” (p. 1)

In this looming, ominous cloud of danger and uncertainty, one thing is certain. “[T]here is certainty about the need for ambitious actions despite prevailing uncertainty regarding the timing and nature of impacts of climate change.” (p. 3) The report identifies “an array of actions”: “The most obvious ones are the need for carbon pricing and for systematic disclosure of climate-related risks by the private sector.” (p. 2, emphasis added). To achieve this safe and certain path, the report calls urgently for an end to “[t]he procrastination that has been the dominant modus operandi of many governments for quite a while.” (p. 66) (As you know, I take the position that our procrastination in Congress has been acquired by the fossil fuel industry through its armada of front groups and dark money channels,

which will make the procrastination all the more blameworthy when the full story emerges.)

The stem warning of the “Green Swan” report, and the certain path to safety from the hazard, are echoed in a recent open letter from BlackRock CEO Larry Fink.

In his letter to CEOs, Fink notes that “[c]limate change has become a defining factor in companies’ long-term prospects,” and that as a result “we are on the edge of a fundamental reshaping of finance” (emphasis in original), one that is “compelling investors to reassess core assumptions about modern finance.”

This extraordinary language is based, as in the “Green Swan” report, on the dual nature of the hazard, “of how climate risk will impact both our physical world and the global system that finances economic growth.” The conclusion is harsh: “In the near future—and sooner than most anticipate—there will be a significant reallocation of capital.” (emphasis in original) The phrase “significant reallocation of capital” couches in bland economic terms a dramatic and painful human prospect.

BlackRock also agrees on the safe path: that “government must lead the way in this transition,” and that “the scale and scope of government action” is “one of the most important questions.” In this regard, “carbon pricing [is] essential to combating climate change.” (emphasis added)

In addition to the BIS “Green Swan” report and the BlackRock letter, in the time since my last letter the following organizations have also brought similar warnings forward.

On December 18, 2019, the Bank of England published a discussion paper outlining its proposal for climate stress tests for corporations under its regulatory supervision.

In January 2020, the management consultancy McKinsey released a comprehensive report on the physical risks of climate change. McKinsey warns that climate change could “make long-duration borrowing unavailable, impact insurance cost and availability, and reduce terminal values.” It could “trigger capital reallocation and asset repricing.” On January 15, 2020, the World Economic Forum’s Global Risks Report identified the top five most likely risks facing the world over the next 10 years, and all were climate-related risks.

A January 2020 report from the Stanford Graduate School of Business notes that “the financial risks from climate change are systemic” and “singular in nature,” and “[g]lobal economic losses from climate change could reach \$23 trillion—three or four times the scale of the 2008 financial crisis.”

Given the scope and scale of these warnings, and given that Senators depend on the Banking Committee as our official eyes and ears into such hazards, I hope that the Committee will rapidly hold searching and fair hearings about these danger warnings.

Sincerely,

SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,

U.S. Senator.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, the warnings are serious. They come from some of our foremost financial experts. So let’s walk through what we have in store if we keep sleepwalking through the climate crisis.

As I said, warning No. 1: coastal property value crash.

Freddie Mac, not an environmental organization but a giant mortgage company, warned that rising sea levels will prompt a crash in coastal property values that will be worse than the housing crash that triggered the 2008 financial crisis.

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

Moody’s, the bond rating agency, warned that climate risk will trigger downgrades in coastal communities’ bond ratings.

BlackRock—the biggest asset manager in the world—estimated that, by the end of the century, climate change will cause coastal communities annual losses that will average up to 15 percent of local GDP with the hardest hit communities, obviously, hit far worse. Hello, Florida.

Warning No. 2: a carbon asset bubble crash.

The Bank of England, the Bank of France, the Bank of Canada, and the European Central Bank—all backed by top-tier, peer-reviewed economic papers—all warn that fossil fuel assets are dramatically overvalued on fossil fuel companies’ books, that these assets are actually uneconomic and will become stranded, and that the resulting “carbon asset bubble” crash will swamp the world economy.

How bad is it? It is called systemic financial risk. Systemic financial risk is finance speak for risk to the entire economic system. Do you remember the 2008 financial crisis? Bad home mortgages blew up more than mortgage companies; they caused a brutal economic recession, and millions of people lost their jobs, their homes, and their retirement savings. We are still recovering from that collapse. That is a systemic financial crisis, and the warnings are that this one will be worse.

In my recent letter, I looked at the more recent warnings. Here is the Bank for International Settlements’ recent Green Swan report. The title is a reference to the metaphor of a black swan—an unpredictable event with calamitous consequences for the economy.

Below is what my letter to the Banking Committee quoted from this Green Swan report.

Page No. 1 warns: “[c]limate change could . . . be the cause of the next systemic financial crisis.”

From page No. 65: “Central banks, regulators and supervisors have increasingly recognized that climate change is a source of major systemic financial risks,” and “climate catastrophes are even more serious than most systemic financial crises.”

Again, from page No. 1: “Exceeding climate tipping points could lead to catastrophic and irreversible impacts that would make quantifying financial damages impossible.”

Let’s slow down and do that one again: “Exceeding climate tipping points could lead to catastrophic and irreversible impacts that would make quantifying financial damages impossible.”

As a little aside here, it is an odd coincidence that the report’s language of “catastrophic and irreversible” mirrors President Trump’s warning in a *New*

York Times ad in 2009 that the consequences of climate change would be catastrophic and irreversible—the same words, “catastrophic and irreversible.” This was said by Trump in 2009 and was written in the Bank for International Settlements’ Green Swan report just 2 months ago.

Back to the Green Swan report, on page No. 3: “The complex chain reactions and cascad[ing] effects associated with both physical and transition risks could generate fundamentally unpredictable environmental, geopolitical, social and economic dynamics.”

Fundamentally unpredictable economic dynamics? Fundamentally unpredictable social dynamics?

Again, on page No. 1: “climate-related risks will remain largely unhedgeable as long as system-wide action is not undertaken.”

Back to page No. 3 again: Like the black swans from which the report derives its title, the “physical and transition risks are characterised by deep uncertainty and nonlinearity, their chances of occurrence are not reflected in past data, and the possibility of extreme values cannot be ruled out”—the possibility of extreme values.

Another big warning that I quoted in my letter to the Banking Committee came from BlackRock CEO Larry Fink. In his open letter to CEOs, Fink echoes the Green Swan warning, writing: “[c]limate change has become a defining factor in companies’ long-term prospects.” As a result, “we are on the edge of a fundamental reshaping of finance,” one that is “compelling investors to reassess core assumptions about modern finance.”

Folks, BlackRock is the biggest asset manager in the world. When its CEO speaks of a fundamental reshaping of modern finance and a shaking of its core assumptions, that is serious stuff.

In my letter, I cite other recent warnings of this systemic financial risk, all since I distributed the binder, many just this year. Here are a few instances.

In December, the Bank of England proposed climate stress tests for corporations under its regulatory supervision. We started bank financial stress tests after the 2008 mortgage crisis, and central banks are starting to do the same for the climate crisis.

In January, massive management consultant McKinsey—again, not a green group but, presumably, a pretty smart group—warned that climate change could “make long-duration borrowing unavailable, impact insurance cost and availability, and reduce terminal values.” Climate change could “trigger capital reallocation and asset repricing,” which is finance speak for the fundamental upheaval of our economy.

January: The World Economic Forum puts out its Global Risks Report that identifies the five most likely global risks facing the world over the next 10 years. Five for five, every single one of them was climate related—all five.

Finally, from the Stanford business school’s Corporations and Society Initiative is a report that warns “the financial risks from climate change are systemic”—there is that word again, “systemic”—that these risks are “singular in nature,” like the green swan-black swan warning, and that “[g]lobal economic losses from climate change could reach \$23 trillion—three or four times the scale of the 2008 Financial Crisis.”

Pause for a moment, and recall the agony of the 2008 financial crisis. Losses in the stock market wiped out nearly \$8 trillion. Housing values cratered; retirement savings vanished; and Americans lost jobs, lost homes, and lost nearly \$10 trillion in wealth. Global economic growth went negative. We all went home to States where we witnessed extraordinary human suffering. Three or four times that? The Stanford report is telling us that we are courting financial peril—systemic risk—the likes of which we cannot imagine.

Climate change is a natural force. It has blown carbon dioxide levels way outside what humankind has ever experienced. It is depositing the equivalent of four Hiroshima-sized atomic bombs of excess heat per second into our oceans—per second—and it is an economic bomb positioned beneath our economy, its detonator ticking down steadily.

We have a chance to defuse the bomb. With all of these warnings that I have described in this binder and that I have described in my letter to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs comes a clear description of the solution: Government must act. Here are the solutions that I quote in my letter to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

On page No. 66 of Green Swan: End “[t]he procrastination that has been the dominant modus operandi of many governments for quite a while.”

By the way, here, it really hasn’t been procrastination; it has been obstruction. It has been obstruction by the fossil fuel industry, its money, and its minions. Clearly, we haven’t done anything serious about it, so that has to end.

On page No. 2 of the Green Swan: “The most obvious ones are the need for carbon pricing and for systematic disclosure of climate-related risks by the private sector.”

It is, indeed, obvious to people in the financial sector. It is only not obvious to us because fossil fuel money swirls all around this place, trying to convince us that the obvious isn’t true. Yet BlackRock CEO Fink’s letter echoes that call for carbon pricing.

He says, “carbon pricing [is] essential to combating climate change.”

So we have the warnings, and we have the solutions. We have everything except the will to act. The reason we don’t have the will to act is because we have dark money, political predators controlling our behavior in ways that are deeply, deeply inappropriate.

Assume that these warnings are correct. When this blows, Senators who didn’t help us act will have to come up with a better excuse than: Well, we weren’t warned—because we were warned. We have been warned over and over and over again. We have been warned by experts. We have been warned by major financial institutions. We have been warned by the custodians of our economy, the central banks.

Colleagues, you have the warnings in your inbox. When this blows up, when coastal property values crash, or when the carbon bubble bursts, or worse, when both happen—nothing says both can’t happen—it is not going to look good to say: Yes, I was warned, but, you see, my political party is funded by the fossil fuel industry so naturally I did nothing. That is how you lose the privilege of representing people.

It was a bit of a tempest in a teapot. It happened in Rhode Island 28 years ago, but I have lived through this. We had a financial crisis in Rhode Island in 1991. I was working for the Governor, who came in to have to clean up that horrible mess, and I was there for the following election after the financial crisis hit.

The legislators who slept through the warnings lost their jobs in a tidal wave of popular outrage. In the subsequent election, the 1992 election, more than one-third of Rhode Island’s General Assembly was either voted out or didn’t even bother running again.

There was a movie, when I went to law school, about the Harvard Law School. I think it was called “One L.” They brought in the freshman class of the One L class, and the crotchety old dean looked at them all and said: A third of you are going to be gone before you graduate because this is so demanding. Look to your right. Look to your left. One of you will not be here at graduation.

When this thing blows, that is going to be a “Look to your left. Look to your right. One of you won’t be here afterwards” moment here in the U.S. Senate.

You think people are mad now, wait until this hits. Wait until these warnings come true, and they know you were warned. Wait for that.

It is time to wake up.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOOKER. 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. BOOKER. Mr. President, before I begin my formal remarks, I just want to state that the Senate page class—I don’t know if you have noticed—are better than adequate. They are doing a good job for the United States of America, and I appreciate them in their service to the U.S. Senate.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, as of today there are over 1,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases in 35 States and Washington, DC. The World Health Organization has now declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Thirty-one people have died in the United States already because of this virus. This includes one person in the State of New Jersey. Communities across the country, and most recently New Jersey, are confronting the possibility of seeing a spread of this virus. We also know that it is possible that, due to delays and lack of availability of testing, the actual number of those infected here in the U.S. is likely higher than what has been reported.

Every day that passes during the spread of this virus—every single day, every single hour, every single moment is critical. We must act urgently to slow its spread, to mitigate its impact. We all have a role to play in fighting the virus, each and every one of us, from our personal hygiene habits to those of us in positions of authority and the roles we can play to protect each other and to protect our communities. One of the most significant ways to do this is actually by encouraging people to stay home. Members of Congress have self-isolated. For people who have symptoms or who have severe coughs or who may have been exposed, there is an importance in social isolation, staying home when you are sick.

The challenge for us as a country is that for millions and millions of Americans this idea of staying home is not an option. Tens of millions of Americans know that if they stay home, they miss a paycheck. If they miss a paycheck, that can mean financial devastation or ruin for their family.

We are now the only industrialized nation in the world that doesn't have paid family sick leave for workers. This is an unwelcome and, unfortunately, this is a dangerous distinction now in the time of a global pandemic. This literally punishes people who are struggling, low-income workers.

Right now the choice for millions of Americans is really this: Choose between your next paycheck and caring for your sick child. Choose between going to work sick or having to skip a meal. Choose between your health and well-being or your family's financial security. That choice, unfortunately, even before this pandemic, was a choice that many Americans knew—that the people who are handling our food, the people who work in our restaurants, and the people who work with our elderly often go to work sick in this country helping the normal flu and other illnesses spread. In the case of a pandemic which has a mortality rate of potentially five or ten times that of the flu, this is, unfortunately, a tragic choice that families are trying to make.

According to the National Partnership for Women and Families, 70 percent of the lowest income workers do not have a single paid sick day. They

also report that 81 percent of people working in the food service industry—let me say that again: 81 percent of people working in our food service industry—and 75 percent of childcare center workers do not have access to paid sick leave. This is disproportionately seen in communities of color.

Think about the choice you make. Your child is sick, you are showing signs but you know if you do not go to work, you will not be able to make rent, you will not be able to put food on the table, you will miss a car payment, which means your car will be repossessed. These are choices that don't just put the families in crisis but they put us all at risk.

The disparity in access to preventive care is also an issue. There are disparities in access to healthcare and affordable medicine for people all across our country—millions and millions of people. This is already before the global pandemic is a health crisis. The continued and unmitigated spread of COVID-19 could have disastrous impacts on people in communities that already have this vulnerability. In my community, where I live, where I hopefully will go home this weekend, in Newark, NJ, the median income for the census tract I live in is about \$14,000, according to the last census. That is \$14,000 per household. I know that public health emergencies can quickly become economic disasters for those who are already struggling in the economic margins of our country.

As we work together to combat the spread of this virus, we need to remember that any of us is only as healthy as our most vulnerable neighbors. In other words, as Martin Luther King said years ago, when he said "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," well, the virus anywhere is a threat to the health and safety of us everywhere.

That is why we need to pass the bill introduced by Senator PATTY MURRAY to guarantee 7 days of sick leave for all workers and critically guarantee 14 days of paid sick leave during public health emergencies. That is an act of self-interest.

Again, I know with over 80 percent of those who handle our food in restaurants, if those folks do not have paid family leave, they are now economically incentivized to go to work sick. It can cause a greater spread of the virus.

Paid sick and family leave is a public health and safety issue, plain and simple. It is about economic justice and economic strength and security, but it is a public health issue for us all. As we prepare to fight this virus, we need to do the things that keep our people, our communities, and our country safe, healthy, and strong. That means joining with the rest of our industrial nations and having paid family sick leave. That means opening up and modernizing the Unemployment Insurance Act, because workers who lose a paycheck because their factory closes or

their restaurant closes or they lost childcare should be able to access the critical benefits they need to help their family get by. That means we also expand SNAP benefits for those kids who are forced to stay at home and from school and may miss meals.

To take on this virus, to protect all of our communities, to ensure the strength of our economy, and to ensure our health, we need to take a comprehensive and inclusive approach. That means leaving no one behind, because we are all in this crisis together.

I have seen challenges from 9/11 to when I was mayor and we had Hurricane Sandy hit. It was the strength of our community in that region around 9/11. It was the strength of that community during that terrible storm. I remember seeing that the strength was that we stood up for each other and stood by each other—neighbors opening up their homes, people lending a hand, people showing sacrifice for each other. That is the American way. Those values and virtues should be reflected in our policy. We are weakened and more vulnerable right now because we do not have commonsense policies that other countries take for granted, like paid family leave. We in the U.S. Senate should act for the love of each other and love of country, for the strength and security and health of our well-being for each other.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I just want to first say that I agree with everything the Senator from New Jersey just said, and I think it is important to heed his message, because as of this afternoon, we are officially facing a global pandemic.

The coronavirus pandemic has spread to more than 100 countries around the world. The World Health Organization has declared it a pandemic. The economic repercussions have taken on a global dimension. This is also a virus that is impacting Americans on a very personal dimension.

Massachusetts residents are worried about keeping their children, their families, and themselves safe. Day to day, even hour to hour, there is a lot of uncertainty during this public health emergency. Will I be able to work? Will I be able to get medical care? Will I be able to pay the mortgage or the rent?

There is one thing I want my constituents to know for certain. I share your concern for your loved ones, and your safety is my top priority. We need our response to this emergency to match the seriousness of the crisis.

I commend the Governors and mayors across this country who have stepped up and provided leadership to their constituents, including Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, who has wisely and swiftly declared a state of emergency in Massachusetts, and our great mayor of Boston, Martin Walsh, who has led early on this issue to make sure that we deal with this crisis.

We need that leadership more than ever because we are seeing a dangerous complete abdication of leadership from Donald Trump. His mismanagement of this crisis is unconscionable. It is immoral, and the harm it is causing the American people is an injustice. The Trump administration has let this crisis spin out of control.

President Trump has repeatedly said the risk is low and minimized the implications of the disease, even saying that Americans are unlikely to die from an infection. But just today, Dr. Tony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the Nation's leading expert on infectious diseases, explained that coronavirus is 10 times more lethal than the flu. The administration overruled health officials who wanted to recommend that the elderly and physically fragile Americans be advised not to fly.

Trump has called efforts to draw attention to the real risk of coronavirus, the new Democrat-created "hoax." Just today, it is being reported that the White House has ordered top officials to treat top-level coronavirus meetings as classified, further hampering information sharing in our response to this virus.

We saw what a lack of transparency, misinformation, and denial did in China with the spread of this virus. We cannot allow that to happen in the United States of America. The bottom line: Families need clear, nonbiased, accurate, and reassuring information. They need it from public health officials. They need it from their elected leaders. There should be no partisanship in pandemics.

The President and his administration have undermined science and our scientists. We have the best scientists in the world. We must put their expertise to work to solve this challenge. We have shown that we can do that. Congress came together and quickly passed \$8.3 billion in emergency funding to respond to this crisis, but we can do much more.

First, the President should immediately declare the coronavirus pandemic an emergency under the Stafford Act. That direction would allow FEMA to access over \$42 billion in disaster relief funds and support States and communities directly as they deal with the spread of this virus. I am officially calling on President Trump to do that today: Declare this an emergency under the Stafford Act. Free up the FEMA money of \$42 billion in disaster relief so that we can work on this issue right now, dealing with it in a way that reflects the seriousness of the threat. The President should act today.

Second, we need widespread and free coronavirus testing and affordable treatment for all.

Third, we need to increase the Federal Medicaid assistance percentage. This would increase the amount of Federal dollars that go into Medicaid, immediately pumping more resources

into States to deal with this health crisis. We did this during the great recession as a way to assist States in providing medical care. We should do it again, and I will be introducing legislation to accomplish that.

Fourth, we need to ensure paid sick leave for our workers. We need to pass Senator PATTY MURRAY's legislation to provide an additional 14 days' sick leave immediately in the event of any public health emergency, including the current coronavirus crisis.

Fifth, we need to enhance unemployment insurance and expand and support programs like SNAP and Women, Infants, and Children and school lunch and other initiatives to support food security. Banks should suspend payments on mortgages for those struggling with the economic impacts of this crisis, and we should provide rental assistance for those who need it.

Sixth, we need to protect consumers, and that includes shielding them from scams and price gouging, which I called on Amazon to do. Amazon took action by removing bad actors from the site who were charging upwards of \$400 for hand sanitizer. No one should be allowed to reap a windfall from fear and human suffering.

We need to provide clear guidance on protections for frontline health workers and access to needed protective equipment. In a pandemic, our healthcare workers are heroes, but these heroes need help. We have to make sure they get the protective gear they need.

The coronavirus is not the first and it will not be the last biothreat the United States faces. That is why I have introduced legislation that provides \$1 billion for research into a universal coronavirus vaccine that prevents the next biothreat that would come in the form of a coronavirus. They morph into different types of coronaviruses. We have to plan for the future. We need to find a universal coronavirus vaccine now, and we have to fund it, which is why I am asking for \$1 billion for that solution to be found.

Sadly, the reality is that this pandemic is going to get worse before it gets better. But this is our call, and this is our time to come together. We all have a responsibility to act, to show leadership, and to support those who are most vulnerable and will be most impacted by this virus. The elderly in nursing homes, our young children, the uninsured, the undocumented—they need our help right now. These are the lives to be saved, livelihoods to be protected, and futures to ensure.

I will continue to work with my colleagues and fight for legislation that provides Massachusetts residents and businesses and those all across our country with the resources they need. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in this commitment to action.

With that, I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CORONAVIRUS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I will have to tell you and all of my colleagues, as they probably know, this has been a fairly tough month for my fellow Tennesseans.

As you know, last week, a tornado tore through eight counties. This started in West Tennessee and exited through Middle Tennessee up on the plateau of our great State. This left multiple communities absolutely devastated. We have mourned the loss of life and livelihoods and property.

I want to, again, thank President Trump for coming to Tennessee to offer his support and for listening to those who were so adversely impacted by this storm and for being there to encourage the emergency management officials, the volunteers, and all of the elected community officials.

We have been encouraged that our Tennesseans have been joined from volunteers all across the country who have shown up to help. They have donated their time, their supplies, and their money to our restoration and rebuilding and recovery and cleanup efforts. To all of those who have volunteered and offered their support, you have made such a difference in the lives of so many Tennessee families. We know this is going to be a long and difficult recovery.

After all of this occurred, on Wednesday of last week, Tennessee health officials confirmed our first case of coronavirus. It was in a patient just south of Nashville in Williamson County.

With all that said, that is a lot to handle in any given week, but Tennesseans and all Americans should be encouraged that there is a lot of good work that is taking place. As I said, the rebuilding efforts span all of those counties in our State.

And then, of course, right there in Nashville are efforts to combat the spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus. The Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Denison Lab is one of the top 20 labs in the world that is studying this disease. For over 25 years, they received Federal grants for their research into how these viruses make us sick, and they are currently helping with the development of treatments, antivirals, and vaccines to deal with coronaviruses, and especially the COVID-19. I am just so pleased with the progress they are making.

Today I want to draw attention to a threat that has, again, been highlighted because of this coronavirus outbreak. Pharmaceuticals are no different from other products in that they

are usually manufactured in pieces—the active ingredients in one place and the inactive ingredients in another place and so on. Currently, only 28 percent of the facilities producing active pharmaceutical ingredients—and you will hear these referred to by the acronym APIs—only 28 percent of the facilities producing these APIs are in the United States. What this means is that American consumers rely heavily on foreign-sourced drugs in order to stay healthy.

Meanwhile, the number of Chinese facilities producing these APIs has more than doubled since 2010. Think about that. Only 28 percent of all the facilities globally are in the United States. China has doubled the number of facilities in China that are producing these APIs.

Why does this matter? Last year, experts at the FDA testified before Congress that while the United States is a world leader in drug development, we are falling behind in drug manufacturing. We do all the R&D here. We have the great scientific minds here. They are creating these products. They are manufactured primarily in China. Their testimony identified the cessation of American manufacturing of APIs as a key health and security concern because it created vulnerabilities in the U.S. supply chain.

The FDA is not alone in their concerns. In its 2019 report to Congress, the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission revealed “serious deficiencies in health and safety standards in China’s pharmaceutical sector.” That is not something that somebody just read on the internet. It is not an assumption. That is the 2019 report to Congress from the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review.

The coronavirus outbreak is drawing much needed attention to the possibility of a global health crisis. Indeed, today the WHO classified it as a pandemic. I have to tell you, I think awareness is not enough. If the Congress does not act, our dependency on China for medications will continue to put American lives at risk.

Yesterday, alongside my friend, the Senator from New Jersey, Mr. MENENDEZ, I introduced the Securing America’s Medicine Cabinet, or the SAM-C Act, to encourage an increase in American manufacturing of APIs. The act would expand upon the Emerging Technology Program within the FDA to prioritize issues related to national security and critical drug shortages and bring pharmaceutical manufacturing jobs back to the United States. In addition, the SAM-C Act authorizes \$100 million to develop centers of excellence for advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing in order to develop these innovations. These centers will be partnerships between institutes of learning and the private sector.

The number of API manufacturing facilities in China is still growing. It grows every single day. Although we cannot yet quantify our dependence on

China’s APIs, we do know the more Chinese products flow into the United States, the more potential there is for trouble.

In 2007 and 2008, 246 people died as a result of adulterated Heparin, a widely used blood thinner. An investigation by the Centers for Disease Control determined that batches of Heparin manufactured in China had been contaminated. The contaminant, which is very cheap, was similar in chemical structure to Heparin and went undetected in routine tests.

Since 2010, regulators have also found serious problems with batches of thyroid medication, muscle relaxers, and antibiotics. In 2018, the FDA recalled a number of blood pressure medications made in China that were contaminated with cancer-causing toxins.

To be perfectly clear though, adulteration isn’t the only concern. In 2016, an explosion at a Chinese factory resulted in a global shortage of an important antibiotic because that factory was the drug’s sole source of production. Think about that. The factory exploded, and there was a shortage of an important antibiotic because they were the only people who were making it. Without intervention, the FDA expects the pharmaceutical industry will continue to rely on Chinese companies to make these active pharmaceutical ingredients, the APIs.

On February 27, 2020, the FDA announced the shortage of one drug that was used to treat patients with the coronavirus. They attributed the shortage to difficulties obtaining—guess what—the active pharmaceutical ingredients from a site in China that has been affected by the disease.

The status quo has made us vulnerable, but the fix is sitting right in front of us. If we fail to act, we are placing our future in the hands of unregulated foreign countries we know to be bad actors. We have a lot of work to do before we will be able to call our supply chain and our healthcare delivery systems secure. But if we are learning anything, we are learning we need to bring this production back into the United States where there is proper oversight, where we know we are not going to have contamination in this supply chain for these active pharmaceutical ingredients. We must embrace telehealth, especially across State lines, and halt the breakdown of care in our rural areas.

I have introduced bills that will help support those things, and I welcome additional cosponsors. The door is always open. All of this activity is here to secure our supply chain and our ability to access the healthcare that Americans need. Today I specifically ask that our colleagues support S. 3432, the SAM-C Act, Securing America’s Medicine Cabinet Act. That is a first step in securing this pharmaceutical supply chain and securing the health and wellness of American consumers.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACCURACY AND TECHNOLOGICAL AVAILABILITY ACT

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, schools, libraries, healthcare providers, and other community anchor institutions need high-capacity broadband for distance learning, access to information, and telemedicine, but too often, anchor institutions’ need for broadband service are overlooked. That is why I want to make sure that anchor institutions are included in the mapping legislation under consideration today. I am pleased that S. 1822 will enable the Federal Communications Commission to develop more accurate and more granular broadband maps. However, in implementing this legislation, the FCC must make sure to include anchor institutions in its list of serviceable locations so that our broadband maps accurately cover anchor institutions as well as residences.

CITIZENSHIP FOR CHILDREN OF MILITARY MEMBERS AND CIVIL SERVANTS ACT

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I rise today to applaud my colleagues for passing H.R. 4803, Citizenship for Children of Military Members and Civil Servants Act, without amendment by unanimous consent.

Last year, Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON joined me in introducing the bipartisan Senate companion to H.R. 4803 to make sure that when children of U.S. citizens serving in the U.S. Armed Forces or working for the U.S. Government are born abroad because their parents are serving our Nation overseas, they automatically acquire U.S. citizenship.

The unanimous passage of the Citizenship for Children of Military Members and Civil Servants Act by the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate sends a strong message that children born to American parents serving our country abroad are just as worthy of automatic citizenship as any other child in this country.

This principle should not be controversial. That is why for the past 15 years, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services considered children of members of the U.S. Armed Forces and Federal Government employees stationed outside the United States to be deemed as “residing in the United States” for the purpose of automatically acquiring citizenship.

This policy was pragmatic and cut burdensome redtape for American parents willing to serve our Nation abroad

as U.S. servicemembers or civil servants. It provided flexibility and allowed U.S. citizen parents to meet residency requirements for acquisition of citizenship while serving overseas. It kept American parents from cutting their overseas commitment short to establish residency so their children could earn citizenship. This policy allowed their children to enjoy the same privileges of acquiring citizenship, as if their parents were working and living within our country's borders.

However, in August 2019, the Trump administration enacted a policy change to reverse this practice. Under this new policy, certain Americans serving their Nation abroad, in uniform or in the civil service, must apply for citizenship on behalf of their children. These parents now have to navigate a complex bureaucratic process and spend hundreds of dollars on an application, with no guarantee that their children will receive citizenship of the very country they are serving abroad in uniform or as a Federal employee.

In fact, this policy change caused Republican and Democratic lawmakers to recognize that current citizenship laws disadvantage these patriotic families. Our citizenship laws and bureaucratic requirements inflict undue burden on these families and make American parents "prove" that their children are worthy of U.S. citizenship.

As a combat veteran, I understand the challenges and family stressors that face Active-Duty members deployed to defend our Nation overseas. Congress should be helping U.S. servicemembers focus on achieving their mission. Providing U.S. servicemembers and civil servants with the peace of mind that they will not have to navigate a lengthy and expensive process to apply for U.S. citizenship for their children advances this important goal.

Our commonsense legislation codifies the previous policy by clarifying the Immigration and Nationality Act to clearly require that children of U.S. citizen parents born in a foreign nation while their parents are stationed abroad automatically acquire U.S. citizenship.

I urge the President to honor the service and dedication of our U.S. servicemembers, military families, and Federal workforce by signing the Citizenship for Children of Military Members and Civil Servants Act into law.

AUSTRALIAN WILDFIRES

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I rise in support of S. Res. 527, a resolution I was proud to cosponsor, recognizing the longstanding partnership between the United States and Australia to share critical firefighting resources during times of crisis.

I first want to thank my colleagues, Senator CARDIN and BARRASSO, for introducing this important legislation recognizing the brave men and women who have not only risked their lives in

the United States as first responders, but went above and beyond to help combat the recent bushfires in Australia.

In November 2019, Australia began to experience devastating bushfires that burned over 30,000,000 acres of land. During this time, more than 300 American firefighters mobilized to assist Australian efforts to suppress and contain the bushfire raging throughout the continent. This bipartisan resolution recognizes the efforts and bravery of Australian and American men and women who worked together to help those in danger and also specifically honors the three American firefighters who lost their lives fighting Australia's bushfires on January 23, 2020.

In my home State of Nevada, several firefighters answered the call to assist with bushfire mitigation and suppression efforts. I want to take a moment to recognize them individually: Matthew James Petersen, Justin Cutler, Brian C. Holmes, Ian McQueary, Jacob Keogh, Juan Islas, Kevin Kelly, Joseph L. Miller, Dylan Rader, Timothy P. Roide, and Eric T. Tilden.

Thank you to all of these brave Nevadans for your service and sacrifice.

TRIBUTE TO HERCHEL WOODY WILLIAMS

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of one of my constituents, an American hero, Medal of Honor recipient Herchel Woody Williams and all of the magnificent men who fought and died in the Battle of Iwo Jima on this the 75th anniversary. Iwo Jima was one of the most bloodiest and costly battles of WWII which saved thousands of lives in the future. Mr. Williams is the last Medal of Honor recipient living from that battle of 27 who received this honor.

IWO

(By Albert Carey Caswell)

In . . .
 In every heart of every Marine . . .
 There are but some battles seen . . .
 From which such magnificent reflections can be gleaned . . .
 All in what it so means, but to be a United States Marine . . .
 All in those most magnificent shades of green . . .
 Semper Fidelis,
 and oh what a brilliant shadow you so cast . . . this sheen . . .
 As you marched off to war as a United States Marine . . .
 Hoo . . . Raaah Jar Head . . .
 As throughout the centuries,
 all for God and Country you have died and bled . . .
 And all in that battle that we call Iwo Jima in what was said . . .
 As a time when their fine blood ran red . . .
 Now, all etched in their creed as said . . .
 Of what it really all so means,
 but to be a United States Marine . . .
 For from out of all of their grave sacrifice and loss,
 but comes such reverence all in this their grave cost . . .
 All in what their great valor and courage to us has taught . . .
 As why still to this very day,

such homage we now must pay . . .
 All in this battle and victory,
 all in what it means To Be A United States Marine . . .
 All in those magnificent shades of green . . .
 But, there are some things men do not talk about . . .
 Of such things surely there is no doubt . . .
 Of which they'd much rather live without . . .
 All in those times of war that which bring about . . .
 As now buried deep down inside all their fine souls throughout . . .
 Of which we all devoutly talk about . . .
 Such things that which make them awake . . .
 All in the middle of night as such deep breath's they take . . .
 As they so re-fight this fight that which they can not escape . . .
 To be carried with them as they grow old . . .
 As with each new step they make in these hearts of gold . . .
 Of the evils that men do,
 that which now leads their fine hearts to such heartache . . .
 And yet too,
 such great warmth from within them emanates . . .
 All because of the brilliance their most gallant hearts would create . . .
 And whenever they think of their Brothers In Arms their fine hearts so ache . . .
 For the ones who so heroically for each other fine lives so gave . . .
 That such splendor neither time nor distance can away so take . . .
 Such horrific memories only death can this pain forsake . . .
 As now all of those visions of horror they carry deep,
 as all in the middle of the night they awake and weep . . .
 Until, up in Heaven rejoined with their Brothers once more they meet . . .
 When, no longer all these nightmares their fine souls will keep . . .
 Oh yes, there are such things that men do not talk about . . .
 That which come to mind within ones soul no doubt . . .
 Who once upon a battlefield of honor so stood,
 for what was right and what was good gallantly all throughout . . .
 For their courage and valor to this day we still talk about . . .
 As all of this we must now tout . . .
 For War is Hell, and Hell is War . . .
 And all of this young children must be told about . . .
 As it was to be the of War of War's . . .
 The Big One so all for sure . . .
 To Save The World, as was their monumental mission for sure . . .
 As a time when every battle but meant the most . . .
 As upon an Island named Iwo Jima,
 where to such new heights their most heroic hearts rose . . .
 Where each new step was but life or death,
 all in hand to hand combat as death stood close . . .
 As somehow, someway . . .
 all of them to the occasion rose in those days . . .
 Rose to such new heights of heroism did they . . .
 With 26,000 casualties,
 as 6,800 United States Marines most precious lives they gave . . .
 And upon a hill in Arlington this day,
 tears come to your eyes whenever you look upon that memorial and that flag they raised . . .

Because, to the top of Mount Suribachi a pilgrimage,
 every Marine dreams in their lifetime to take . . .
 As it was 35 nights and days of Hell on earth as all so showed their fine worth . . .
 As it was 70,000 United States Marines, who dug in deep against an enemy which could not be seen . . .
 As so quickly boys had to become men as their fine red blood ran green . . .
 All in what it so means,
 to be a United States Marine . . .
 As all around them death lie replete,
 with the smell of death upon their feet . . .
 Such scenes of hell and carnage that would make the Angels weep . . .
 At the evils that men do all in one's soul to keep . . .
 And so too,
 all in what new magnificence heights a heroic heart can reach . . .
 With some of the fiercest fighting of the war as each new horrific day would repeat . . .
 With the greatest number of Medal of Honors presented in any battle this feat . . .
 As it all began as they reached the beach . . .
 After a bombardment looking like it would never cease . . .
 As an eerie quiet calmness upon their souls beseeched . . .
 As step by step into the island they left from that beach,
 until finally all hell broke loose as they were all in deep . . .
 Walking into an ambush as out of tunnels and caves the enemy would creep . . .
 With years to plan such strategy to succeed . . .
 As these Marines climbed and fought for every inch of real estate so steep . . .
 Through inhospitable terrain of volcanic ash as death for them would meet . . .
 As all of these dark scenes from hell so came to pass . . .
 While, in the cover of darkness from out of caves such a grave toll the enemy amassed . . .
 As a new weapon came into play,
 the Zippo Tank a flame thrower helped win the day . . .
 Helping these heroes through such hell to so make their way . . .
 Because, that airfield they could not concede . . .
 As why 6,821 American Fine Heroes would die and bleed . . .
 or War Is Hell and Hell Is War,
 is that but not what heaven is for?
 And in the coming years how many more would have died?
 If it were but not for all of their most heroic battle cries!
 For only the number our Lord knows up on high . . .
 Fighting to the death hand to hand,
 as perhaps each one a Medal of Honor could command . . .
 Flamethrowers . . . tunnel by tunnel . . .
 cave by cave . . .
 Tunnel rats crawling into death so very brave . . .
 And how did they all get through each new dark day?
 As the enemy made them to such hell to pay . . .
 But, in the end there is nothing that has ever been made,
 which can stop a United States Marine to this day . . .
 As such a heavy toll these Marines made the enemy pay . . .
 21,844 would die, the ones who now lie in that dark ground cold graves . . .
 As it was on the 5th day,

when 5 Marines and a Navy Corpsman portrayed . . .
 Out into the future such an iconic moment made . . .
 Now, all etched in stone to be imprinted on every Marines heart they say . . .
 As all part of their very DNA . . .
 Whether at the top of Mount Suribachi,
 or when we see that photo or memorial tears come to our eyes do they . . .
 Making us all so proud to be American's the rest of our lives each day . . .
 For this battle is and will always be,
 one of our Nation's most decisive of all victories . . .
 With only 216 of enemy so left,
 to tell their children's children all about that battle against America's Best. . .
 Yea, there are some things that men do not talk about . . .
 Who for all of their courage and valor Heaven so awaits them no doubt . . .
 And all throughout the history of The United States Marines,
 Iwo Jima will now be always seen . . .
 As the embodiment of what it all so means,
 but to be a United States Marine . . .
 And to what new heights a heroes heart can achieve . . .
 Can so climb too all in those magnificent shades of green . . .
 As Iwo Jima, is and will always be,
 Semper Fidelis of what faith and courage is all about. . .
 Iwo . . . Hoo . . . Rah . . . no doubt . . .

CENTENNIAL OF THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA GREATER WYOMING COUNCIL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today in celebration of 100 years of Scouting in Wyoming.

On Saturday, March 21, 2020, the Boy Scouts of America Greater Wyoming Council will host their annual Silver Beaver and Eagle Scout Recognition Luncheon in Casper. This year holds a special significance as they will celebrate their 100th anniversary at this event.

The Boy Scouts of America incorporated on February 8, 1910. Scouting came to Casper with the creation of the Casper Council in 1917. The council continued to expand, changing its name to the Casper Area Council in 1925, Central Wyoming Council in 1931, and finally the Greater Wyoming Council in 2016. The Boy Scouts of America's mission is "to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law." The council remains true to this mission and to their purpose to educate youth, age 5 to 21, to build character, develop personal fitness, and to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship.

In Wyoming, the Greater Wyoming Council upholds the mission and purpose of the Boy Scouts through service to 11 counties and 3,000 youth across our State. The organization enjoys tremendous community support with 1,400 volunteers and 150 community partners. This consistent and broad involvement demonstrates what a valuable benefit the council provides to the youth and people of Wyoming.

The council provides a variety of events and opportunities for Scouts,

families, and communities in Wyoming. These events include their annual Strength of America Banquet, the annual Camp Buffalo Bill Summer Camp in Cody, fishing tournaments, and family camping trips. They work hard to provide many opportunities for Scouts to participate in fellowships, trainings, basecamps, and much more, to help members be, as the Scouts say, "Prepared for life."

Brad Bodoh, the Scout executive for the council, has a strong background in serving the Scouts of America. We are fortunate to have his leadership. Before Brad made Wyoming home, he worked for the Boy Scouts of America in Iowa and Ohio. The knowledge and experience Brad brings to the Greater Wyoming Council allow the Scouts to flourish and expand their skills. Senior district executives Frank Solla and Andrew Allgeier, in addition to the council office staff, are instrumental in growing and supporting the organization's participation throughout the state.

In Wyoming, we live by the Code of the West. One of the principles of the Code is "to take pride in your work." The council's volunteers and families embody this principle. They make it possible for Scouts to advance through the program all the way through the rank of Eagle Scout. They see their work rewarded every time a Cub Scout earns a new badge and an Eagle Scout completes their project. The support for this organization is truly exceptional, and Wyoming is better for it.

Mr. President, it is my pleasure to honor this historic milestone for the Greater Wyoming Council. Their centennial celebration is a recognition of all the hard work and preparation the council has done in the past 100 years and will continue to do for the next 100 years. Bobbi and I are proud of the Greater Wyoming Council and the community support behind it. We celebrate the century of Scouting in Wyoming and extend our congratulations.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING FALLON FOOD HUB

● Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, each week the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship recognizes one small business that exemplifies the hard work and perseverance of the American Dream and the American entrepreneur. The great State of Nevada is home to more than 250,000 small businesses of all types from mom-and-pop shop bakeries to world renowned cybersecurity firms. In fact, about 99 percent of all business in Nevada are small businesses. Nevada's small businesses are the driving force behind our State's rapidly growing economy and the engine that powers our communities. It is therefore my honor to recognize Nevada's Fallon Food Hub, a small business with a strong and deeprooted commitment to

improving lives and a desire to give back to the community, for recently having been named the U.S. Senate Small Business of the Week.

The Fallon Food Hub's mission is to educate the northern Nevada community about the benefits of eating seasonally in order to create a thriving and expanding local food scene, resulting in increased opportunities for producers and local businesses. Fallon Food Hub believes that through educational opportunities for the community about health and wellness, members of the community can gain a greater sense of cooperation and appreciation for the area producers, local farmers, and specialty food producers that serve the Silver State. Through increasing awareness of and appreciation of local farming and proper nutrition, people can learn a healthier lifestyle while also supporting local producers.

The Fallon Food Hub conducts frequent surveys to get a sense of what the community is interested in learning, hosts monthly classes on the benefits of eating seasonal produce, and keeps the community informed through a monthly newspaper. The Fallon Food Hub provides an outlet for local farmers, ranchers, and value-added producers to sell their goods.

I would also like to recognize the work that Fallon Food Hub does to advocate on behalf of local farmers. Through ongoing education for members and surrounding communities about farmers and the origins of local food, Fallon Food Hub is encouraging our community to connect with one another on a new level. They are an example of an outstanding business with deep love for our community and one of the many reasons why they were a clear choice for this recognition.

Small businesses truly are the driving force for development and growth not just in Nevada, but across our entire Nation. Small businesses like Fallon Food Hub not only help our economy succeed, they also give back by uplifting our communities, inspiring others to open businesses of their own, improving people's health and well-being, and changing lives for the better.

Again, I would like to recognize Fallon Food Hub and all the employees there for their contribution to Nevada and our Nation and congratulate them for being named the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee's Small Business of the Week. As a member of the committee, it was my honor to nominate this proud Nevada business for recognition and my continued privilege to represent them and all of Nevada's small businesses in the U.S. Senate.●

REMEMBERING DICK AMBROSIUS

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I would like to remember the life of Dick Ambrosius. Mr. Ambrosius passed away on January 24, 2020, at the age of 73.

Dick Ambrosius was born in Huron, SD, and graduated from Huron High School in 1964. He attended the University of South Dakota, USD, in Vermillion, SD, where he earned a master's degree. He was actively involved in the Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity and the Reserve Officer Training Corps during his time at USD and continued to advocate for the value of Greek life and the importance of military service throughout his career.

Following his college graduation in 1968, he was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army, where he ultimately attained the rank of captain prior to his separation from service. He served in Vietnam and was awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart medals.

In life, Mr. Ambrosius was a tireless advocate for senior citizens and disabled veterans. He served as executive director for Warriors Never Give Up, a nonprofit organization that provides outdoor adventures for disabled veterans.

I commend Mr. Ambrosius for his devotion to his community, disabled veterans, and seniors. I offer my sincerest condolences to his family and friends, including his wife Karen, daughter Jennifer, sons Matt and Jacob, sister Nancy, and numerous grandchildren.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

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

H.R. 3598. An act to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to automatically discharge the loans of certain veteran borrowers, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6020. An act to require an evaluation by the Government Accountability Office of the social, economic, and historic contributions that Minor League Baseball has made to American life and culture.

At 5:30 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 6172. An act to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to prohibit the production of certain business records, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 3598. An act to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to automatically discharge the loans of certain veteran borrowers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 6020. An act to require an evaluation by the Government Accountability Office of the social, economic, and historic contributions that Minor League Baseball has made to American life and culture; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 6172. An act to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to prohibit the production of certain business records, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communication was laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and was referred as indicated:

EC-4289. A communication from the Attorney and Federal Register Liaison, Bureau of the Fiscal Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Government Participation in the Automated Clearing House" (RIN1510-AB32) 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.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. WICKER for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Coast Guard nomination of Capt. Miriam L. Lafferty, to be Rear Admiral (Lower Half).

*Coast Guard nomination of James M. Kelly, to be rear Admiral.

*Coast Guard nomination of Vice Adm. Scott A. Buschman, to be Vice Admiral.

*Coast Guard nomination of Rear Adm. Steven D. Poulin, to be Vice Admiral.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

*Coast Guard nominations beginning with Jason A. Acuna and ending with David J. Zwirblis, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 6, 2020.

*Coast Guard nominations beginning with Jennifer J. Conklin and ending with Gennaro A. Ruocco, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 13, 2020.

*Coast Guard nominations beginning with Ryan G. Angelo and ending with Jeffrey S. Zamarin, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 13, 2020.

By Mr. GRASSLEY for 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.

*Kipp Kranbuhl, of Ohio, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

*Sarah C. Arbes, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to

respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 3434. A bill to make Federal law enforcement officer peer support communications confidential, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SINEMA (for herself and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. 3435. A bill to authorize the Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to reclassify the technical enforcement officers in the Homeland Security Investigations tactical patrol unit operating on the lands of the Tohono O'odham Nation (commonly known as the "Shadow Wolves") as special agents; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. HEINRICH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. MCSALLY, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 3436. A bill to establish grant programs to improve the health of border area residents and for all hazards preparedness in the border area including bioterrorism, infectious disease, and noncommunicable emerging threats, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. LOEFFLER (for herself and Ms. SMITH):

S. 3437. A bill to reauthorize certain programs regarding rural health care; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. LOEFFLER (for herself and Ms. SMITH):

S. 3438. A bill to reauthorize the telehealth network and telehealth resource centers grant programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 3439. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit high deductible health plans to divide the deductible between medical and drug costs for purposes of qualifying for health savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 3440. A bill to require States to adopt contingency plans to prevent the disruption of Federal elections from the COVID-19 virus, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. JONES (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 3441. A bill to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to provide exceptions to the prohibition on participation by individuals convicted of certain offenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 3442. A bill to require private health insurers to cover care related to COVID-19 without cost-sharing and to provide for special enrollment periods for individuals diagnosed with COVID-19; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 3443. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide Medicaid coverage for all pregnant and postpartum women, to provide coverage under the Med-

icaid program for services provided by doulas, midwives, and lactation consultants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. WARREN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. COONS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KAINE, Mr. REED, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 3444. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the list of diseases associated with exposure to certain herbicide agents for which there is a presumption of service connection for veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. CASEY, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 3445. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to award grants to develop, administer, and evaluate early childhood education apprenticeships, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 3446. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to prescribe regulations providing that a presumption of service connection is warranted for a disease with a positive association with exposure to a herbicide agent, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 3447. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a program to allow qualified group practices to furnish certain items and services at qualified skilled nursing facilities to individuals entitled to benefits under part A and enrolled under part B of the Medicare program to reduce unnecessary hospitalizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. SMITH (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 3448. A bill to provide for certain contracting requirements to promote fair and safe workplaces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TILLIS (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. 3449. A bill to amend the Trademark Act of 1946 to provide for third-party submission of evidence relating to a trademark application, to establish expungement and ex parte proceedings relating to the validity of marks, to provide for a rebuttal presumption of irreparable harm in certain proceedings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 3450. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to treat certain programs of education converted to distance learning by reason of emergencies and health-related sit-

uations in the same manner as programs of education pursued at educational institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KAINE, and Ms. ROSEN):

S. Res. 539. A resolution supporting the rights of the people of Iran to determine their future, condemning the Iranian regime for its crackdown on legitimate protests, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CASIDY, Mr. KING, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. REED, Mr. CARPER, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. TESTER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. BENNET):

S. Res. 540. A resolution recognizing the contributions of AmeriCorps members and alumni to the lives of the people of the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. Res. 541. A resolution recognizing and celebrating the 200th anniversary of the entry of Maine into the Union as the 23d State; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 596

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 596, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for direct payment to physician assistants under the Medicare program for certain services furnished by such physician assistants.

S. 785

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 785, a bill to improve mental health care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1136

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1136, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize concurrent use of Department of Defense Tuition Assistance and Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve benefits, and for other purposes.

S. 1942

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1942, a bill to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to create a presumption that a disability

or death of a Federal employee in fire protection activities caused by any of certain diseases is the result of the performance of the duty of the employee, and for other purposes.

S. 2254

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2254, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a Pension Rehabilitation Trust Fund, to establish a Pension Rehabilitation Administration within the Department of the Treasury to make loans to multiemployer defined benefit plans, and for other purposes.

S. 2366

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2366, a bill to streamline the employer reporting process and strengthen the eligibility verification process for the premium assistance tax credit and cost-sharing subsidy.

S. 2669

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2669, a bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to clarify the obligation to report acts of foreign election influence and require implementation of compliance and reporting systems by Federal campaigns to detect and report such acts, and for other purposes.

S. 2772

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2772, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare program.

S. 2950

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 2950, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to concede exposure to airborne hazards and toxins from burn pits under certain circumstances, and for other purposes.

S. 2970

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2970, a bill to improve the fielding of newest generations of personal protective equipment to the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

S. 2989

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2989, a bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify the mailing requirement relating to social security account statements.

S. 3218

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a co-

sponsor of S. 3218, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to modify the definition of franchise fee, and for other purposes.

S. 3242

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3242, a bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to protect privacy rights, and for other purposes.

S. 3244

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 3244, a bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to improve the detection, prevention, and treatment of mental health issues among public safety officers, and for other purposes.

S. 3276

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3276, a bill to eliminate asset limits employed by certain federally funded means-tested public assistance programs, and for other purposes.

S. 3337

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3337, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to require more accountability in the airline industry, and for other purposes.

S. 3350

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) 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. 3353

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3353, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for extended months of Medicare coverage of immunosuppressive drugs for kidney transplant patients, and for other purposes.

S. 3364

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 3364, a bill to improve the health and academic achievement of students in highly polluted environments, and for other purposes.

S. 3372

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) 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. 3374

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3374, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to protect the confidentiality of substance use disorder patient records.

S. 3398

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3398, a bill to establish a National Commission on Online Child Sexual Exploitation Prevention, and for other purposes.

S. 3415

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) 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. 3418

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 3418, a bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to allow the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide capitalization grants to States to establish revolving funds to provide hazard mitigation assistance to reduce risks from disasters and natural hazards, and other related environmental harm.

S. 3422

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor 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. 3431

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. RES. 99

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 99, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that Congress should take all appropriate measures to ensure that the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and is not subject to privatization.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 539—SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE OF IRAN TO DETERMINE THEIR FUTURE, CONDEMNING THE IRANIAN REGIME FOR ITS CRACKDOWN ON LEGITIMATE PROTESTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KAINE, and Ms. ROSEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 539

Whereas, on January 8, 2020, the Government of Iran shot down Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752, lied about its culpability, and then admitted to downing the plane on January 11 after evidence was made public by other sources;

Whereas all 167 passengers and 9 crewmembers aboard Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 died in the resulting crash;

Whereas passengers were mostly citizens of Iran, but also included citizens of Canada, Ukraine, Great Britain, Afghanistan, and Sweden;

Whereas, during January 11 through 13, 2020, protesters gathered across Iran to denounce lying and incompetence by regime leadership with respect to the airline shootdown;

Whereas video clips of protests from January 11 through 13, 2020, showed protesters chanting against Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamene'i and the IRGC;

Whereas video clips suggest Iranian authorities deployed tear gas and live ammunition against protesters in January 2020;

Whereas earlier antigovernment protests in Iran began on November 15, 2019, and rapidly spread to dozens of Iranian cities in 29 of Iran's 31 provinces, in the most significant antigovernment protests in Iran since the Green Movement demonstrations in 2009 and 2010;

Whereas the protests began in response to an announced increase on the price of fuel, and protesters expressed numerous economic grievances, while also calling for the structural reform of the political system and condemning current and former Iranian leaders;

Whereas reports indicate that Iranian security forces responded to protests with lethal force, killing hundreds of demonstrators and arresting thousands more;

Whereas reports indicate that the Government of Iran authorities have, in many instances, refused to return victims' bodies to their families and that security forces have removed bodies from morgues and transferred them to unknown locations;

Whereas, on November 16, 2019, Iranian authorities began implementing a near-total shutdown of internet services, stopping nearly all means of online communications for people inside Iran to prevent the sharing of

images and videos of deadly violence being used by security forces;

Whereas, on November 16, 2019, Iran's Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli suggested that the Iranian regime would no longer show "tolerance" toward the protesters;

Whereas, on November 17, 2019, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamene'i called the demonstrators "villains", suggested that protests were incited by foreign enemies and domestic insurgents, and ordered Iranian security services to "implement their duties" to end the protests;

Whereas, on November 18, 2019, the IRGC deployed to the southwestern city of Mahshahr, which had been taken over by demonstrators, and engaged in mass repression over a period of 4 days, reportedly killing as many as 100 people;

Whereas multiple United States laws provide authorities to designate and sanction elements of the Iranian regime for its repressive conduct, including those involved in significant corruption or serious human rights abuses, including—

(1) the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8501 et seq.);

(2) the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8701 et seq.);

(3) the Countering Iran's Destabilizing Activities Act of 2017 (22 U.S.C. 9401 et seq.); and

(4) the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (subtitle F of title XII of Public Law 114-328; 22 U.S.C. 2656 note);

Whereas the Iranian regime was implicated in a terrorist plot targeting gatherings of Iranian dissidents in Paris in June 2018 and in Albania in March 2018;

Whereas, in August 2018, the United States Government arrested 2 Iranian nationals who later pleaded guilty for acting on behalf of the Iranian regime to conduct covert surveillance in the United States against officials of the Iranian opposition for a target package which, according to the Department of Justice complaint, may have included "apprehension, recruitment, cyber exploitation, or capture/kill operations";

Whereas the Iranian regime has routinely violated the human rights of Iranian citizens, including by implementing ongoing, systematic, and serious restrictions of freedom of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of opinion and expression, including the continuing closures of media outlets, arrests of journalists, and the censorship of expression in online forums such as blogs and websites;

Whereas, on November 22, 2019, the United States imposed sanctions on Iran's Minister of Information and Communications Technology for his role in shutting down internet access in Iran;

Whereas the Department of State's most current Human Rights Report noted that the Government of Iran levied "severe restrictions on free expression, the press, and the internet, including censorship, site blocking, and criminalization of libel; substantial interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, such as overly restrictive nongovernmental organization (NGO) laws; egregious restrictions of religious freedom; restrictions on political participation;" and that there is "widespread corruption at all levels of government";

Whereas, on November 18, 2019, the Office of the German Chancellor stated, "It is legitimate and deserving of our respect when people courageously air their economic and political grievances, as is currently happening in Iran. . . . We urge the government in Tehran to respect freedom of assembly and expression.";

Whereas, on November 20, 2019, the French Foreign Ministry stated, "France is following the demonstrations taking place in Iran with concern. It expresses its deep concern at reports that a large respect its international human rights obligations.";

Whereas, on December 2, 2019, a statement from Amnesty International confirmed that "extensive video footage verified and analyzed by Amnesty International's Digital Verification Corps shows security forces shooting at unarmed protesters who did not pose any imminent risk";

Whereas, on December 6, 2019, United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet said, "Verified video footage indicates severe violence was used against protesters, including armed members of security forces shooting from the roof of a justice department building in one city, and from helicopters in another," and added that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has also received footage showing security forces "shooting to kill";

Whereas, on December 8, 2019, a Declaration by the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell Fontelles stated, "A growing body of evidence indicates that despite repeated calls for restraint, the Iranian security forces' disproportionate response to recent demonstrations has led to high numbers of deaths and injuries. For the European Union and its Member States, the widespread and disproportionate use of force against nonviolent protestors is unacceptable.";

Whereas, on December 16, 2019, Amnesty International further reported that "[eyewitness testimony] suggests that, almost immediately after the Iranian authorities massacred hundreds. . . participating in nationwide protests, [the authorities] went on to orchestrate a wide-scale clampdown designed to instill fear and prevent anyone from speaking out about what happened";

Whereas, on January 17, 2020, the United States designated IRGC General Hassan Shahvarpour, Khuzestan Province's Vali Asr Commander, for his involvement in gross violations of human rights against protestors during the November 15 through 18, 2019, protests in Mahshahr, Iran;

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations, voted for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, done at New York December 19, 1966;

Whereas, during February 2020 parliamentary elections, against the backdrop of regime interference, disqualification of reformist and moderate candidates, and anger over crackdowns on protesters, the majority of the Iranian people chose not to vote, making turnout the lowest in Iran's post-1979 history; and

Whereas the Iranian regime has a long history of violent repression of dissent, including—

(1) in 1988, carrying out the barbaric mass executions of thousands of political prisoners—including teenagers and pregnant women—by hanging and firing squad for refusing to renounce their political affiliations and, in some cases, for possessing or distributing political reading material;

(2) in 1999, brutally suppressing a student revolt that was one of the largest mass uprisings until that point in the country since 1979, in a crackdown since referred to as "Iran's Tiananmen Square";

(3) following voting irregularities that resulted in the 2009 re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, cracking down on peaceful political dissent from wide segments of civil society in a cynical attempt to retain its undemocratic grip on power; and

(4) beginning in December 2017, and continuing for several months after protests erupted over economic conditions in more than 80 cities, confronting protestors with excessive force that resulted in at least 25 deaths and 4,000 arrests: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) stands with the people of Iran that are engaged in legitimate protests against an oppressive, corrupt regime;

(2) supports the right of Iranians to peacefully assemble, without fear of persecution and violence, whether in Iran or internationally;

(3) respects the proud history and rich culture of the Iranian nation and fully supports efforts by the people of Iran to promote the establishment of basic freedoms that build the foundation for the emergence of a freely elected and transparent republic;

(4) condemns the Iranian regime's downing of Ukrainian International Airlines Flight 752 and its repeated lying to the people of Iran and around the world about its responsibility for the disaster;

(5) condemns the Iranian regime for its record of brutal repression against peaceful protests;

(6) condemns the Iranian regime's serious human rights abuses against Iranians, significant corruption, and destabilizing activities abroad;

(7) commends the statements of support for protesters from the United States and key United States allies;

(8) calls on all democratic governments and institutions to support the ability of the people of Iran to live in a free society such that they can exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(9) demands that the Iranian regime abide by its international obligations with respect to human rights and civil liberties, including freedoms of peaceful assembly and speech, including for members of the press;

(10) urges the President to work to convene emergency sessions of the United Nations Security Council and the United Nations Human Rights Council to condemn the ongoing human rights violations perpetrated by the Iranian regime and establish a mechanism by which the Security Council can monitor such violations;

(11) encourages the United States Government to do everything in its power to ensure the Iranian people have free and uninterrupted access to the internet;

(12) calls on telecommunications companies to reject requests by the regime to cut off the Iranian people from social media and other communications platforms; and

(13) urges the President and the Secretary of State to work with the international community to signal through future multilateral and bilateral discussions that the Government of Iran's human rights violations are unacceptable.

SENATE RESOLUTION 540—RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AMERICORPS MEMBERS AND ALUMNI TO THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. KING, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. REED, Mr. CARPER, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. TESTER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN,

Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 540

Whereas, since its inception in 1994, the AmeriCorps national service program has proven to be a highly effective way—

(1) to engage the people of the United States in meeting a wide range of local and national needs; and

(2) to promote the ethics of service and volunteerism;

Whereas, since 1994, more than 1,100,000 individuals have taken the AmeriCorps pledge to “get things done for America” by becoming AmeriCorps members;

Whereas, each year, AmeriCorps, in coordination with State service commissions, provides opportunities for approximately 75,000 individuals across the United States to give back in an intensive way to communities, States, Tribal nations, and the United States;

Whereas AmeriCorps members have served more than 1,600,000,000 hours nationwide, helping—

(1) to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people of the United States;

(2) to protect the environment;

(3) to contribute to public safety;

(4) to respond to disasters;

(5) to strengthen the educational system of the United States; and

(6) to expand economic opportunity;

Whereas, since 1994, AmeriCorps funds have been invested in nonprofit, community, educational, and faith-based groups, and those funds leverage hundreds of millions of dollars in outside funding and in-kind donations each year;

Whereas AmeriCorps members recruit and supervise millions of community volunteers, demonstrating the value of AmeriCorps as a powerful force for encouraging people to become involved in volunteering and community service;

Whereas AmeriCorps members serve at more than 21,000 locations across the United States, including at nonprofit organizations, schools, and faith-based and community organizations;

Whereas AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps campuses in the States of Mississippi, Iowa, California, and Colorado strengthen communities and develop future leaders through team-based service;

Whereas AmeriCorps members nationwide, in return for the service of those members, have earned nearly \$4,000,000,000 to use to further their own educational advancement at colleges and universities across the United States;

Whereas AmeriCorps members, after their terms of service with AmeriCorps end, have been more likely to remain engaged in their communities as volunteers, teachers, and nonprofit professionals than the average individual;

Whereas AmeriCorps is a proven pathway to employment, providing members with valuable career skills, experience, and contacts to prepare them for the 21st century workforce and to help close the skills gap in the United States;

Whereas, in 2009, Congress passed the bipartisan Serve America Act (Public Law 111-13; 123 Stat. 1460), which authorized the expansion of national service, expanded opportunities to serve, increased efficiency and accountability, and strengthened the capacity of organizations and communities to solve problems;

Whereas national service programs have engaged millions of people in the United States in results-driven service in the most vulnerable communities of the United

States, providing hope and help to individuals with economic and social needs;

Whereas national service and volunteerism demonstrate the best of the spirit of the United States, with people turning toward problems and working together to find community solutions; and

Whereas AmeriCorps Week, observed in 2020 from March 8 through March 14, is an appropriate time for the people of the United States—

(1) to salute current and former AmeriCorps members for their positive impact on the lives of people in the United States;

(2) to thank the community partners of AmeriCorps for making the program possible; and

(3) to encourage more people in the United States to become involved in service and volunteering: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) encourages the people of the United States to join in a national effort—

(A) to salute AmeriCorps members and alumni; and

(B) to raise awareness about the importance of national and community service;

(2) acknowledges the significant accomplishments of the members, alumni, and community partners of AmeriCorps;

(3) recognizes the important contributions made by AmeriCorps members and alumni to the lives of the people of the United States; and

(4) encourages individuals of all ages to consider opportunities to serve in AmeriCorps.

SENATE RESOLUTION 541—RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENTRY OF MAINE INTO THE UNION AS THE 23D STATE

Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 541

Whereas the place now known as Maine is Wabanaki Homeland and is home to vibrant indigenous cultures and communities;

Whereas Maine was a district of Massachusetts, 1 of the 13 original colonies of the United States;

Whereas, by 1820, people living in Maine had built a thriving economy that included farming, forestry, fishing, and shipbuilding industries;

Whereas, in March 1820, Congress and President James Monroe approved the Missouri Compromise, authorizing the establishment of the State of Maine and making Maine the 23d State of the United States;

Whereas Maine is characterized by hardworking, altruistic, and independent people and a strong community spirit;

Whereas the State motto of Maine, “Dirigo”, Latin for “I lead”, reflects the trailblazing nature of Maine and the 1,300,000 inhabitants of Maine;

Whereas Maine has 1 of the highest numbers of veterans per capita in the United States, and is the home of Togus, the first veterans hospital in the United States;

Whereas Maine contributes greatly to national defense through the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Bath Iron Works, Pratt & Whitney, and numerous other suppliers and installations whose skilled employees are a vital asset to the United States;

Whereas distinguished statesmen from Maine include William King, Joshua Chamberlain, Hannibal Hamlin, Margaret Chase Smith, and Edmund Muskie;

Whereas Maine is known as “The Pine Tree State” and “Vacationland” for the extensive forests and spectacular scenery that draw millions of visitors to Maine every year;

Whereas the majestic beauty of Mount Katahdin, 1 of the highest peaks in New England and the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail, and other unspoiled natural treasures beckon outdoor enthusiasts;

Whereas the rugged coastline and vibrant fall foliage of Maine are showcased in particular splendor in Acadia National Park, 1 of the 10 most visited national parks in the United States;

Whereas the pristine Atlantic waters off the coast of Maine support fishermen and women and the iconic lobster industry, which is the most valuable fishery in the United States and is known worldwide as a standard of seafood excellence;

Whereas Maine is the most forested State in the United States, with a long history of pulp and paper production and an exciting recent turn toward innovation and diversification of forest products;

Whereas the fertile soils of Maine have helped farmers produce the best potatoes and wild blueberries for generations, and have supported the increase of organic agriculture operations;

Whereas March 15, 2020, marks the 200th anniversary of the attainment of statehood by Maine; and

Whereas that bicentennial is a monumental occasion to celebrate and commemorate the achievements of the great State of Maine: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes and celebrates the 200th anniversary of the entry of Maine into the Union as the 23d State.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I have 10 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 COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on pending nominations.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Douglas Benevento, of Colorado, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and David A. Wright, of South Carolina, and Christopher T. Hanson, of Michigan.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 10:10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Kipp Kranbuhl, of Ohio, to be an Assistant

Secretary of the Treasury, Sarah C. Arbes, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Jason J. Fichtner, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Social Security Advisory Board.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 10:10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nomination: James E. Trainor III, of Texas, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a closed roundtables.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a closed roundtables.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 2 p.m., to conduct a closed roundtables.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

The Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

The Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 6172

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6172) to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to prohibit the production of certain business records, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AMERICORPS MEMBERS AND ALUMNI TO THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 540, submitted earlier today.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 540) recognizing the contributions of AmeriCorps members and alumni to the lives of the people of the United States.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 540) was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENTRY OF MAINE INTO THE UNION AS THE 23D STATE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration S. Res. 541, submitted earlier today.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 541) recognizing and celebrating the 200th anniversary of the entry of Maine into the Union as the 23d State.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 541) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

SAVANNA'S ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 407, S. 227.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 227) to direct the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols appropriate to address missing and murdered Indians, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as "Savanna's Act".

SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to clarify the responsibilities of Federal, State, Tribal, and local law enforcement agencies with respect to responding to cases of missing or murdered Indians;

(2) to increase coordination and communication among Federal, State, Tribal, and local law enforcement agencies, including medical examiner and coroner offices;

(3) to empower Tribal governments with the resources and information necessary to effectively respond to cases of missing or murdered Indians; and

(4) to increase the collection of data related to missing or murdered Indian men, women, and children, regardless of where they reside, and the sharing of information among Federal, State, and Tribal officials responsible for responding to and investigating cases of missing or murdered Indians.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **CONFER.**—The term "confer" has the meaning given the term in section 514 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1660d).

(2) **DATABASES.**—The term "databases" means—

(A) the National Crime Information Center database;

(B) the Combined DNA Index System;

(C) the Next Generation Identification System; and

(D) any other database relevant to responding to cases of missing or murdered Indians, including that under the Violent Criminal Apprehension Program and the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System.

(3) **INDIAN.**—The term "Indian" means a member of an Indian Tribe.

(4) **INDIAN COUNTRY.**—The term "Indian country" has the meaning given the term in section 1151 of title 18, United States Code.

(5) **INDIAN LAND.**—The term "Indian land" means Indian lands, as defined in section 3 of the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000 (25 U.S.C. 4302).

(6) **INDIAN TRIBE.**—The term "Indian Tribe" has the meaning given the term "Indian tribe" in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(7) **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.**—The term "law enforcement agency" means a Tribal, Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency.

SEC. 4. IMPROVING TRIBAL ACCESS TO DATABASES.

(a) **TRIBAL ENROLLMENT INFORMATION.**—The Attorney General shall provide training to law enforcement agencies regarding how to record the Tribal enrollment information or affiliation, as appropriate, of a victim in Federal databases.

(b) **CONSULTATION.**—

(1) **CONSULTATION.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General, in cooperation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall complete a formal consultation with Indian Tribes on how to further improve Tribal data relevance and access to databases.

(2) **INITIAL CONFER.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General, in coordination with the Secretary of the Interior, shall confer with Tribal organizations and urban Indian organizations on how to further improve American Indian and Alaska Native data relevance and access to databases.

(3) **ANNUAL CONSULTATION.**—Section 903(b) of the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (34 U.S.C. 20126) is amended—

(A) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

"(2) enhancing the safety of Indian women from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, homicide, stalking, and sex trafficking;"

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(4) improving access to local, regional, State, and Federal crime information databases and criminal justice information systems."

(c) **NOTIFICATION.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall—

(1) develop and implement a dissemination strategy to educate the public of the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System; and

(2) conduct specific outreach to Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations regarding the ability to publicly enter information, through the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System or other non-law enforcement sensitive portal, regarding missing persons, which may include family members and other known acquaintances.

SEC. 5. GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO CASES OF MISSING OR MURDERED INDIANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the consultation described in section 4(b)(1) is completed, the Attorney General shall direct United States attorneys to develop regionally appropriate guidelines to respond to cases of missing or murdered Indians that shall include—

(1) guidelines on inter-jurisdictional cooperation among law enforcement agencies at the Tribal, Federal, State, and local levels, including inter-jurisdictional enforcement of protection orders and detailing specific responsibilities of each law enforcement agency;

(2) best practices in conducting searches for missing persons on and off Indian land;

(3) standards on the collection, reporting, and analysis of data and information on missing persons and unidentified human remains, and information on culturally appropriate identification and handling of human remains identified as Indian, including guidance stating that all appropriate information related to missing or murdered Indians be entered in a timely manner into applicable databases;

(4) guidance on which law enforcement agency is responsible for inputting information into appropriate databases under paragraph (3) if the Tribal law enforcement agency does not have access to those appropriate databases;

(5) guidelines on improving law enforcement agency response rates and follow-up responses to cases of missing or murdered Indians; and

(6) guidelines on ensuring access to culturally appropriate victim services for victims and their families.

(b) **CONSULTATION.**—United States attorneys shall develop the guidelines required under subsection (a) in consultation with Indian Tribes and other relevant partners, including—

(1) the Department of Justice;

(2) the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

(3) the Department of the Interior;

(4) the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

(5) Tribal, State, and local law enforcement agencies;

(6) medical examiners;

(7) coroners;

(8) Tribal, State, and local organizations that provide victim services; and

(9) national, regional, or urban Indian organizations with relevant expertise.

(c) **COMPLIANCE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the United States attorneys shall implement, by incorporating into office policies and procedures, the guidelines developed under subsection (a).

(2) **MODIFICATION.**—Each Federal law enforcement agency shall modify the guidelines, policies, and protocols of the agency to incorporate the guidelines developed under subsection (a).

(3) **DETERMINATION.**—Not later than the end of each fiscal year beginning after the date the guidelines are established under this section and incorporated under this subsection, upon the request of a Tribal, State, or local law enforcement agency, the Attorney General shall determine whether the Tribal, State, or local law enforcement agency seeking recognition of compliance has incorporated guidelines into their respective guidelines, policies, and protocols.

(d) **ACCOUNTABILITY.**—Not later than 30 days after compliance determinations are made each fiscal year in accordance with subsection (c)(3), the Attorney General shall—

(1) disclose and publish, including on the website of the Department of Justice, the name of each Tribal, State, or local law enforcement agency that the Attorney General has determined has incorporated guidelines in accordance with subsection (c)(3);

(2) disclose and publish, including on the website of the Department of Justice, the name of each Tribal, State, or local law enforcement agency that has requested a determination in accordance with subsection (c)(3) that is pending;

(3) collect the guidelines into a resource of examples and best practices that can be used by other law enforcement agencies seeking to create and implement such guidelines.

(e) **TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Attorney General shall use the National Indian Country Training Initiative to provide training and technical assistance to Indian Tribes and law enforcement agencies on—

(1) implementing the guidelines developed under subsection (a) or developing and implementing locally specific guidelines or protocols for responding to cases of missing or murdered Indians; and

(2) using the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System and accessing program services that will assist Indian Tribes with responding to cases of missing or murdered Indians.

(f) **GUIDELINES FROM INDIAN TRIBES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Indian Tribes may submit their own guidelines to respond to cases of missing or murdered Indians to the Attorney General.

(2) **PUBLICATION.**—Upon receipt of any guidelines from an Indian Tribe, the Attorney General shall publish the guidelines on the website of the Department of Justice in 1 centralized location to make the guidelines available as a resource to any Federal agency, State, or Tribal government.

SEC. 6. ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) **ANNUAL REPORTING.**—Beginning in the first fiscal year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall include in its annual Indian Country Investigations and Prosecutions report to Congress information that—

(1) includes known statistics on missing Indians in the United States, available to the Department of Justice, including—

- (A) age;
- (B) gender;
- (C) Tribal enrollment information or affiliation, if available;
- (D) the current number of open cases per State;
- (E) the total number of closed cases per State each calendar year, from the most recent 10 calendar years; and
- (F) other relevant information the Attorney General determines is appropriate;

(2) includes known statistics on murdered Indians in the United States, available to the Department of Justice, including—

- (A) age;
- (B) gender;
- (C) Tribal enrollment information or affiliation, if available;
- (D) the current number of open cases per State;
- (E) the total number of closed cases per State each calendar year, from the most recent 10 calendar years; and
- (F) other relevant information the Attorney General determines is appropriate;

(3) maintains victim privacy to the greatest extent possible by excluding information that can be used on its own or with other information to identify, contact, or locate a single person, or to identify an individual in context; and

(4) includes—
(A) an explanation of why the statistics described in paragraph (1) may not be comprehensive; and

(B) recommendations on how data collection on missing or murdered Indians may be improved.

(b) COMPLIANCE.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning in the first fiscal year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, for the purpose of compiling accurate data for the annual report required under subsection (a), the Attorney General shall request all Tribal, State, and local law enforcement agencies to submit to the Department of Justice, to the fullest extent possible, all relevant information pertaining to missing or murdered Indians collected by the Tribal, State, and local law enforcement agency, and in a format provided by the Department of Justice that ensures the streamlining of data reporting.

(2) DISCLOSURE.—The Attorney General shall disclose and publish annually, including on the website of the Department of Justice, the name of each Tribal, State, or local law enforcement agency that the Attorney General has determined has submitted the information requested under paragraph (1) for the fiscal year in which the report was published.

(c) INCLUSION OF GENDER IN MISSING AND UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS STATISTICS.—Beginning in the first calendar year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall include gender in its annual statistics on missing and unidentified persons published on its public website.

SEC. 7. IMPLEMENTATION AND INCENTIVE.

(a) GRANT AUTHORITY.—Section 2101(b) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10461(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(23) To develop, strengthen, and implement policies, protocols, and training for law enforcement regarding cases of missing or murdered Indians, as described in section 5 of Savanna’s Act.

“(24) To compile and annually report data to the Attorney General related to missing or murdered Indians, as described in section 6 of Savanna’s Act.”.

(b) GRANTS TO INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.—Section 2015 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10452(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (9), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (10), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:
“(11) develop, strengthen, and implement policies, protocols, and training for law enforcement regarding cases of missing or murdered Indians, as described in section 5 of Savanna’s Act; and
“(12) compile and annually report data to the Attorney General related to missing or murdered Indians, as described in section 6 of Savanna’s Act.”.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

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

The bill (S. 227), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time and passed.

NOT INVISIBLE ACT OF 2019

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 417, S. 982.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.
The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 982) to increase intergovernmental coordination to identify and combat violent crime within Indian lands and of Indians.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Not Invisible Act of 2019”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—
(1) the term “Commission” means the Department of the Interior and the Department of Justice Joint Commission on Reducing Violent Crime Against Indians under section 4;

(2) the term “human trafficking” means act or practice described in paragraph (9) or paragraph (10) of section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102);

(3) the term “Indian” means a member of an Indian tribe;

(4) the terms “Indian lands” and “Indian tribe” have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000 (25 U.S.C. 4302); and

(5) the terms “urban centers” and “urban Indian organization” have the meanings given the terms in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603).

SEC. 3. COORDINATOR OF FEDERAL EFFORTS TO COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE PEOPLE.

(a) COORDINATOR DESIGNATION.—The Secretary of the Interior shall designate an official within the Office of Justice Services in the Bureau of Indian Affairs who shall—

(1) coordinate prevention efforts, grants, and programs related to the murder of, trafficking of, and missing Indians across Federal agencies, including—

- (A) the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and
- (B) the Department of Justice, including—
(i) the Office of Justice Programs;
- (ii) the Office on Violence Against Women;
- (iii) the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services;
- (iv) the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and
- (v) the Office of Tribal Justice;

(2) ensure prevention efforts, grants, and programs of Federal agencies related to the murder of, trafficking of, and missing Indians consider the unique challenges of combating crime, violence, and human trafficking of Indians and on Indian lands faced by Tribal communities, urban centers, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Tribal law enforcement, Federal law enforcement, and State and local law enforcement;

(3) work in cooperation with outside organizations with expertise in working with Indian tribes and Indian Tribes to provide victim centered and culturally relevant training to tribal law enforcement, Indian Health Service health care providers, urban Indian organizations, Tribal community members and businesses, on how to effectively identify, respond to and report instances of missing persons, murder, and trafficking within Indian lands and of Indians; and

(4) report directly to the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) REPORT.—The official designated in subsection (a) shall submit to the Committee on Indian Affairs and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report to provide information on Federal coordination efforts accomplished over the previous year that includes—

(1) a summary of all coordination activities undertaken in compliance with this section;

(2) a summary of all trainings completed under subsection (a)(3); and

(3) recommendations for improving coordination across Federal agencies and of relevant Federal programs.

SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE JOINT COMMISSION ON REDUCING VIOLENT CRIME AGAINST INDIANS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall establish and appoint all members of a joint commission on violent crime on Indian lands and against Indians.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) COMPOSITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall be composed of members who represent diverse experiences and backgrounds that provide balanced points of view with regard to the duties of the Commission.

(B) DIVERSITY.—To the greatest extent practicable, the Secretary of the Interior shall ensure the Commission includes Tribal representatives from diverse geographic areas and of diverse sizes.

(2) APPOINTMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall appoint the members to the Commission, including representatives from—

- (A) tribal law enforcement;
- (B) the Office of Justice Services of the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

(C) State and local law enforcement in close proximity to Indian lands, with a letter of recommendation from a local Indian Tribe;

(D) the Victim Services Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

(E) the Department of Justice’s Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit;

(F) the Office of Violence Against Women of the Department of Justice;

(G) the Office of Victims of Crime of the Department of Justice;

(H) a United States attorney’s office with experience in cases related to missing persons,

murder, or trafficking of Indians or on Indian land;

(I) the Administration for Native Americans of the Office of the Administration for Children & Families of the Department of Health and Human Services;

(J) the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services;

(K) a Tribal judge with experience in cases related to missing persons, murder, or trafficking;

(L) not fewer than 3 Indian Tribes from diverse geographic areas, including 1 Indian tribe located in Alaska, selected from nominations submitted by the Indian Tribe;

(M) not fewer than 2 health care and mental health practitioners and counselors and providers with experience in working with Indian survivors of trafficking and sexual assault, with a letter of recommendation from a local tribal chair or tribal law enforcement officer;

(N) not fewer than 3 national, regional, or urban Indian organizations focused on violence against women and children on Indian lands or against Indians;

(O) at least 2 Indian survivors of human trafficking;

(P) at least 2 family members of missing Indian people;

(Q) at least 2 family members of murdered Indian people;

(R) the National Institute of Justice; and

(S) the Indian Health Service.

(3) PERIODS OF APPOINTMENT.—Members shall be appointed for the duration of the Commission.

(4) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made and shall not affect the powers or duties of the Commission.

(5) COMPENSATION.—Commission members shall serve without compensation.

(6) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall consider the provision of travel expenses, including per diem, to Commission members when appropriate.

(c) DUTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may hold such hearings, meet and act at times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers to be advisable to carry out the duties of the Commission under this section.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall develop recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior and Attorney General on actions the Federal Government can take to help combat violent crime against Indians and within Indian lands, including the development and implementation of recommendations for—

(i) identifying, reporting, and responding to instances of missing persons, murder, and human trafficking on Indian lands and of Indians;

(ii) legislative and administrative changes necessary to use programs, properties, or other resources funded or operated by the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice to combat the crisis of missing or murdered Indians and human trafficking on Indian lands and of Indians;

(iii) tracking and reporting data on instances of missing persons, murder, and human trafficking on Indian lands and of Indians;

(iv) addressing staff shortages and open positions within relevant law enforcement agencies, including issues related to the hiring and retention of law enforcement officers;

(v) coordinating tribal, State, and Federal resources to increase prosecution of murder and human trafficking offenses on Indian lands and of Indians; and

(vi) increasing information sharing with tribal governments on violent crime investigations and prosecutions in Indian lands that were terminated or declined.

(B) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 18 months after the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall make publicly available and submit all recommendations developed under this paragraph to—

(i) the Secretary of the Interior;

(ii) the Attorney General;

(iii) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(iv) the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate;

(v) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

(vi) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(C) SECRETARIAL RESPONSE.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Secretary of the Interior and the Attorney General receive the recommendations under paragraph (2), the Secretary and the Attorney General shall each make publicly available and submit a written response to the recommendations to—

(i) the Commission;

(ii) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(iii) the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate;

(iv) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

(v) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(d) FACA EXEMPTION.—The Commission shall be exempt from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

(e) SUNSET.—The Commission shall terminate on the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to and the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

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

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

The bill, as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. McCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass, as amended?

The bill (S. 982), as amended, was passed.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

TAIWAN ALLIES INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE (TAIPEI) ACT OF 2019

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Chair lay before the Senate the message to accompany S. 1678.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 1678) entitled "An Act to express United States support for Taiwan's diplomatic alliances around the world.", do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR A CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL COLLECTIVELY TO THE CHINESE-AMERICAN VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 91, which was received from the House.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 91) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the Chinese-American veterans of World War II.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 91) was agreed to.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2020

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 12; 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 proceed to executive session for the consideration of Calendar No. 587; further, that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture vote on the Danly nomination occur at 11:45 a.m. and that all postcloture time expire at 1:45 p.m.

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

March 11, 2020

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

S1711

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW fore the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:06 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 12, 2020, at 9:30 a.m.