

how the VA manages suicide prevention resources and how the VA provides care and information sharing for veterans seeking mental healthcare from both VA and community providers.

This bill takes a strong, evidence-based approach to meeting veterans' needs that haven't always been given priority. It is encouraging to me that is bipartisan. At a time when we don't appear to agree on very much, we are able to deliver for our heroes.

I am proud to have worked with my Democratic colleagues to write bills that were included in this package. Senator TESTER and I partnered on the Promoting Coordination for Veteran Suicide Prevention Act. This bill, this amendment, ensures that a thorough review of veterans who die by suicide within 1 year of separation from the Armed Services is conducted jointly by both the Department of Defense and by the VA.

As I mentioned, most suicides occur within 6 months of separating from service. If that is the case, then the Department of Defense can do a review of what are those risk factors and have a warm handoff to the Veterans' Administration Hospital. And because we made automatic that first year of service within the VA, that warm handoff can be taken without any impediments of is there coverage or is there not.

There is also going to be a partnership between the mental health and suicide prevention experts in both the VA and DOD that will contribute to improved information sharing and help further close the gap in ensuring high-quality, seamless care between these two Departments, focusing on the serviceperson who has now become a veteran.

Senator TESTER and I also worked together on the VA Research Approval Efficiency Act. This provision authorizes the Veterans Administration to leverage accredited commercial institutional review boards for use in connection with VA-sponsored clinical research. Getting the VA commercial options for approving clinical trials will add much-needed efficiencies and begin to reduce the disparity with academic and other institutions that, today, lead in clinical trial administration.

If we know that our treatments for those with mental illness often need to be improved, we want to give our veterans access to those improved treatments as soon as possible, but we also want to make sure that those treatments suit the needs of the veteran. You can only do this by encouraging that research activity with full consent of the veteran—full consent—by which she or he may participate in these trials for her benefit, his benefit, but also for the benefit of us all. This reform enables the VA to increase the caliber care it delivers to veterans in a variety of clinical areas.

Senator SINEMA and I introduced the Improving Mental Health Care for Veterans Act. This provision requires VA and DOD to establish a joint clinical

practice guideline for treatment of serious mental illness. This common-sense approach builds on an already robust library of clinical practice guidelines that serve to standardize and reinforce treatment procedures in other areas.

Just as a point, if someone is found to be well-controlled in a certain medical regimen but then they transition to another different care with a different formulary, then all the hard work to find just the right clinical pharmaceutical treatment program to keep the person balanced now has to be changed because the second department has a different formulary—a different set of drugs with which they wish to treat—all the good work done here is lost there.

We wish to eliminate that possibility by making sure there is a common set of clinical guidelines so that somebody with stress is passed off and it is seamless, both in terms of the clinical care, but also the medicines which they may take.

The passage of the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act is the culmination of a lot of hard work from both Democratic and Republican Senators. It now goes to the House for consideration. I urge the House to swiftly pass this legislation so that President Trump can sign it into law.

This bill will have a direct, positive impact in the care the VA delivers to American veterans. They answered the call to serve our Nation; now, Congress must answer the call to better serve them.

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

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

#### VETERANS

Mr. BOOZMAN. I want to take a second to thank the Presiding Officer for the great work that he is doing on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. As the Senator just spoke earlier, he is working hard to take these bills and improve them. Everyone is working together, and we certainly appreciate the fact that the Senator has so much experience in a variety of different ways and has added so much the committee. We are very thankful for that.

I rise today to recognize the significant steps that the Senate recently took to improve the mental healthcare of veterans and save lives with the passage of the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act. This moves us one step closer to paving a new path forward in suicide prevention and imple-

menting a new strategy that, I believe, will give hope and purpose to the men and women who live with these invisible injuries. More than 50,000 organizations nationwide provide suicide prevention services for veterans. These nonprofits and community organizations play a vital role and have taken the lead to build effective programs.

I have heard from veterans how organizations like the one based in Rogers, AR, Sheep Dog Impact Assistance, are encouraging them to live their best life. I have also seen how outdoor therapies like Rivers of Recovery are supporting the mental health needs of veterans and how veteran service organizations are stepping up and addressing mental healthcare in their communities.

We have so many organizations in Arkansas and throughout the country that are doing a great job in this capacity. In Mount Home, AR, the Disabled American Veterans chapter changed its approach to outreach after the region experienced the highest veteran suicide rate in the State, one of the highest in the Nation. Members enhanced their contact with veterans in the area. This connection has saved lives and reversed the suicide rate in Northern Arkansas.

It makes sense that we harness the ideas and successes of this DAV chapter and other advocates into sound policy. That is why I joined with Senator MARK WARNER to champion a new strategy that authorizes the VA to provide grants to nonprofits in their communities, establishing a framework to coordinate these efforts and expand outreach to more veterans. Additionally, this legislation will enable the VA to establish greater partnerships with communities to better measure the effectiveness of ongoing suicide prevention programs.

I appreciate the leadership of the VA Committee Chairman JERRY MORAN, Ranking Member JON TESTER, and the assistance of them and their staffs in working with me and Senator WARNER and our staffs to include our proposal, the IMPROVE Well-Being for Veterans' Act, in the comprehensive mental healthcare package, again, that we just passed in the Senate. I especially want to thank Rosie Heiss, Amanda Want, and Pat McGuigan, members of my staff who spent countless hours and worked with numerous groups to find a solution to help advance this idea.

The VA estimates around 20 veterans commit suicide each day. That number has remained roughly unchanged despite a tremendous increase in funding. Interestingly, only 6 of those 20 veterans are receiving healthcare services in the VA. By sharing information and collaborating with veteran-serving nonprofits and other community organizations, we can expand our network and provide the help the veterans need and, ultimately, capture more veterans into our VA system.

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie called this approach "key" to unlocking the

veteran suicide crisis. Hopefully, he is right. I applaud the Senate for advancing this bill and look forward to working with my colleagues in the House of Representatives to quickly approve this legislation so that we can reassure veterans that their best days are ahead of them.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### NATIONAL SEERSUCKER DAY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, today I rise in recognition of seersucker manufacturers and enthusiasts across the United States. I wish everyone a Happy National Seersucker Day. This uniquely American fashion has a storied history dating back to 1909. The first seersucker suit was designed by Joseph Haspel at his Broad Street facility in New Orleans, LA. Louisiana is proud to have played an important part in introducing the country to seersucker apparel.

This lightweight cotton fabric, known for its signature pucker, has been worn and enjoyed by Americans across the country during the hot summer months. Mr. Haspel said it best: "Hot is hot, no matter what you do for a living."

In the 1990s, Seersucker Day was established by Members of this Chamber to honor this unique American fashion. I proudly resumed this tradition in 2014 in the U.S. House of Representatives and continued this tradition in the U.S. Senate. This year, I wish to designate June 13 as the seventh annual National Seersucker Day. I encourage everyone to wear seersucker on this day to commemorate this traditionally American clothing.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO THE TREASUREBELLES

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing the women of the TreasureBelles out of Treasure County for their efforts to promote Montana ag in their community.

The TreasureBelles are made up of over 20 women who have made it their goal to promote and highlight the importance of beef through various efforts to integrate agriculture into different community organizations and events.

The TreasureBelles enjoy hosting Ag Day at the school in Hysham each Spring, feeding Lions Club members each month, serving food at the annual

StreetFest, and rallying community members together to donate beef for student lunches.

The TreasureBelles are also proud members of the Montana Cattlewomen Association and the American National Cattlewomen Association.

It is my honor to recognize the TreasureBelles for their commitment to Montana ag, and I applaud their efforts to serve their fellow Montanans in the Treasure County community. ●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 7617. An act making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, and for other purposes.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 7617. An act making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. WICKER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 999. A bill to provide for Federal coordination of activities supporting sustainable chemistry, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-251).

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

Report to accompany S. 2525, A bill to require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to conduct a study of personal protective equipment worn by firefighters to determine the prevalence and concentration of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-252).

By Mr. WICKER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment:

S. 2597. A bill to require the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to make certain operational models available to the public, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-253).

By Mr. WICKER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with amendments:

S. 2775. A bill to improve the cyber workforce of the United States, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-254).

S. 2805. A bill to improve transit-oriented development financing, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-255).

By Mr. WICKER, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 3132. A bill to extend the Undertaking Spam, Spyware, And Fraud Enforcement With Enforcers beyond Borders Act of 2006, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 116-256).

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 4523. A bill to regulate large-scale emissions of methane and natural gas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CARPER:

S. 4524. A bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of comprehensive tobacco cessation services under such titles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

S. 4525. A bill to ensure that health care providers do not incur additional Federal income tax liability due to receipt of assistance through the Provider Relief Fund during the COVID-19 pandemic; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. CASEY, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. BROWN, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 4526. A bill to ensure that COVID-19 related Federal programs and assistance provided for the translation of informational materials relating to awareness, screening, testing, and treatment for COVID-19 into priority languages; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

#### ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 549

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 549, a bill to modernize voter registration, promote access to voting for individuals with disabilities, protect the ability of individuals to exercise the right to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.

S. 624

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 624, a bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require States to provide for same day registration.

S. 1791

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 1791, a bill to prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), and marital status in the administration and provision of child welfare services, to improve safety, well-being, and permanency for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning foster youth, and for other purposes.

S. 2561

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2561, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, to further the conservation