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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, who loves us without ceasing, we turn our thoughts toward You. Remain with our Senators today so that for no single instance they will be unaware of Your providential power.

We thank You for Your infinite love that permits us to make mistakes yet still grow in grace and a knowledge of You. Lord, save us from any evil course or idle path that leads away from Your will. Today, we pray for the President of the United States and for the leaders in every land. Help them to bear their responsibilities with honor, and, Lord, today we also thank You for the amazing career of Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUYE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 21, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUYE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following leader remarks the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

Following morning business the Senate will resume consideration of the capital formation bill. At approximately 10:40 this morning, there will be a cloture vote on the IPO bill.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Will the Chair announce the business of the day.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the minority controlling the final half.

The Senator from Illinois.

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, there has been a lot of discussion about the affordable health care act passed by Congress. In fact, just next week, across the street, the Supreme Court will take up this bill and decide whether it is constitutional. It is an important decision. It is one that will affect millions of Americans, and scarcely anyone understands the impact of this law and what it means to their daily lives.

The first aspect I wish to speak about is the most controversial aspect of it, the so-called individual mandate. What is it? From my point of view, it is a basic method of saying to everyone in America: You have a personal responsibility. You cannot say you are just not going to buy any health insurance; that you don't think you are ever going to need it and are not going to worry about it.

The problem is, of course, those people who make that statement get sick. Some of them get involved in accidents. Some go to a doctor and are diagnosed with terrible illnesses and diseases that require treatment and surgery, and that costs a lot of money. The uninsured people show up at hospitals. They are not pushed away; they are invited in. They receive the treatment. Then they can't pay for it.

It turns out that 63 percent of the medical care given to uninsured people in America isn't paid for—not by them. It turns out the rest of us pay for it. Everyone else in America who has health insurance has to pick up the cost for those who did not accept their personal responsibility to buy health insurance.

So, so what? What difference does that make? It makes a difference. It adds $1,000 a year to our health insurance program. In other words, you and me and everyone with health insurance is subsidizing those people who say: Don't mandate anything on me. Don't tell me I have a personal responsibility. But when I get sick, you can pay

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

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for it. That is what the individual mandate comes down to.

I listen to those who say, well, this is just too darn much government to say that people who can afford it need to have health insurance. Keep in mind, this health care bill says if people cannot afford it—if they are too poor or their income is limited—there is a helping hand, not only in the Tax Code but even through Medicaid to make sure they have affordable health care insurance which will never cost them more than 8 percent of their income. A lot of American families would jump at health insurance that would only cost 8 percent of their income. But the law says people have to be willing to pay up to 8 percent of their income to have health insurance. The reason, of course, is if they don't pay, everyone else pays. If they get sick, they cost us $116 billion a year in uncompensated health care coverage paid for those who do not accept their personal responsibility to buy health insurance.

Ruth Marcus has an article in this morning's Washington Post, and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 20, 2012]

116 BILLION REASONS TO BE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL MANDATE

(By Ruth Marcus)

The most compelling sentences in the Obama administration's brief defending the constitutionality of the health-care law come early on. ''As a class,'' the brief advises on Page 7, ''the uninsured consumed $116 billion of health-care services in 2008.''

On the next page, the brief drives the point home: ''In 2008, people without insurance did not pay for 63 percent of their health-care costs.''

Those figures amount to a powerful refutation of the argument that the individual mandate—the requirement that individuals obtain insurance or pay a penalty—exceeds the government's authority to regulate interstate commerce. To me, $116 billion seems like a whole lot of commerce.

But let's leave the Supreme Court justices to hack their way through the underbrush of the Commerce Clause. Because those numbers are not only relevant to Commerce Clause jurisprudence, they illuminate the fundamental irrationality of public opposition to the individual mandate.

The mandate is by far the most unpopular feature of a law on which Americans are otherwise evenly divided. A Kaiser Family Foundation poll this month found that two-thirds of those surveyed disliked the mandate. Even among Democrats, a majority (53 percent) opposed the requirement; independents (66 percent) and Republicans (77 percent) were even more hostile.

Yet this is a provision that the overwhelming majority—those with insurance—should support, for the simple reason that these people currently end up footing the bill for much of that $116 billion.

As the government's brief notes, ''Congress found that this cost-shifting increases the average premium for insured families by more than $1,000 per year.''

In other words, those worried about having to pay ever-higher premiums should be clamoring for the individual mandate, not agitating for repeal.

Indeed, for all the bristling over the mandate, it will be irrelevant to the 80 percent of non-elderly Americans who already have insurance, either through their employers, government programs, or purchased on their own.

The biggest real-world risk to these people would be if the court were to overturn the mandate yet allow the rest of the health-care law to remain in place, driving premiums ever upward.

Amazingly, Republicans have managed to transform the mandate from an exemplar of personal responsibility into the biggest public policy bogeyman of all time.

The irony of the fight over the mandate is that President Obama was against it before he was for it. During the 2008 campaign, one of the signature differences between Obama and Hillary Clinton was that Clinton's health plan included an individual mandate whereas Obama's mandate covered only children.

Once elected, Obama quickly recognized the inescapable truth: An individual mandate was essential to make the plan work. Without that larger pool of premium-payers, there is no feasible way to require insurance companies to cover all applicants and charge the same amount, regardless of their heath status.

In part, hostility to the mandate reflects a broader uneasiness with the perceived encroachment of big government.

In the Kaiser poll, 30 percent of those who opposed the mandate cited government overreach as the biggest reason. Not surprisingly, twice as many Republicans (40 percent) cited that reason as did Democrats (18 percent).

But opposition to the mandate also stems from the public's failure to understand—or, alternatively, the administration's failure to communicate—basic facts.

For example, Kaiser found that when people were told that most Americans ''would automatically satisfy the requirement because they already have coverage through their employers,'' favorability toward the mandate nearly doubled, to 61 percent.

Favorable attitudes rose to nearly half when people were told that without the mandate, insurance companies would still be allowed to deny coverage to those who are sick; that without the mandate people would wait until they were sick to purchase insurance, driving up premium costs; or that those unable to afford coverage are exempt.

''People don't understand how the mandate works at all and they don't understand why it's there,'' Kaiser's polling director, Mollyann Brodie, told me.

Brodie suspects that it's too late to change minds. ''This law as a whole has really become a symbolic issue to people and they really aren't open to information,'' she said.

Maybe, but the administration must keep trying—not only to sell the law's goodies but to explain how the mandate makes them possible. Otherwise, they could end up winning the minds of the justices, yet losing the hearts of the people whose votes they need to keep the law in place.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this article spells it out. This issue of an individual mandate is an issue of personal responsibility. If you believe someone should be able to walk away from their responsibility to have health coverage they can afford and that their medical bills should be your family's responsibility, then cheer on all these folks who are saying we are going to repeal ObamaCare. That is what it boils down to. Do you want to pay their bills? I don't think we should have to. I think everyone in this country should accept that responsibility.

There are some other aspects of the affordable health care act which we don't hear talked about from those who are calling for its repeal. Let me tell my colleagues one. Do you have a child graduating from college, looking for a job? I have been in that circumstance. My wife and I raised three children. Some of them found a job, but it took a little while. While they were looking for a job, did you ever say to your son or daughter fresh out of college: How about health insurance. They probably said to you: Sorry, Mom; sorry, Dad. I can't do that now. When I get a job, I will get back to it. But I feel just fine. I feel just fine.

It doesn't work that way, and any responsible parent knows it. So we changed the law, and here is what we said: If you have family health insurance, it can cover your son or daughter up to the age of 26. That expanded the reach of health insurance coverage. It covered these young college graduates and young people looking for work so they had that protection even when they were unemployed.

So did it make any difference? Thanks to this provision, 2.5 million young people have gained coverage nationwide, and 102,000-plus in my State of Illinois. That means for 2.5 million parents, some peace of mind, knowing their kids are covered by the family plan. That was part of this bill which many Republican Presidential candidates are saying they want to repeal. Really? Do you want to explain that to 2.5 million families who have the peace of mind that their son or daughter is covered with health insurance up to the age of 26?

How about the seniors paying for their Medicare prescription drug bills. There was this doughnut hole, which means if seniors have prescription drugs covered by Medicare and they are expensive, they will reach a point during the course of a year when they have to go into their savings to pay for about $2,000 worth of prescription drugs before the government comes back and starts helping them again. We started closing that doughnut hole, closing that gap, giving $250 of that $2,000 they have to pay back to people in a rebate initially, and then providing a discount on drugs for seniors. That is part of affordable care. That is part of what the Republicans scream is ObamaCare.

Is it a good idea? Well, just ask 152,000 Medicare recipients in Illinois who have received this rebate to help pay for their prescription drugs. Ask 144,000 seniors in Illinois who have received a 50-percent discount on drug costs, and then ask the millions across America who have benefited. We are giving people on fixed incomes and limited savings a helping hand so they can have the prescription drugs they need to be healthy and strong and safe and independent. Is that what you want to be when you are a senior? Most of us do, and this bill helps.

Third, this bill basically covers preventive services. We all know the story: Get in and see a doctor for a colonoscopy or a mammogram. Early detection and treatment is money saved and lives saved. We extended preventive care under Medicare. For 1.3 million Medicare recipients in Illinois—just in my State, 1.3 million; more in the Presiding Officer's State—they have preventive care now that they didn't have before. It means they are likely to stay healthy longer and cost less to our health care system. This is another aspect they want to repeal, those who are running against the affordable care act, running against the health care bill President Obama has pushed for.

There is also a provision which says insurance companies have to spend 80 percent of the premiums they collect—80 percent—on actual medical care. They can take 20 percent for profits and administrative costs and the like but 80 percent on actual medical care. The State of Minnesota already had that on the books, and it worked. So we said let's do it nationwide so if premiums go up, it is to reimburse health care—not to take out in profits, not to take it out in bonuses, not to spend on an advertising budget for an insurance company. That is a big change. The insurance companies hate it like the devil hates holy water, and the Republican Presidential candidates want to repeal it. I think it is a sensible change to ensure coverage and one that we ought to protect, not prohibit.

There are other provisions in this law as well, but one that affects me personally and has affected, I am sure, thousands of Americans is the question of preexisting conditions. Do you have one? A lot of people do. A lot of people don't even know they have one. Sometimes insurance companies dream them up. They would deny coverage for health insurance if somebody had—get ready—acne, a preexisting condition so no coverage. If there is a history of suicide in a family, they would deny them health care coverage, preexisting condition.

Let me just say to every parent listening: Thank the Lord if your child doesn't have asthma, diabetes, or something more serious because until the affordable care act was passed, that was enough to disqualify your child and maybe your family from health insurance coverage. Oh, they can't wait to repeal that. They say: Let's repeal ObamaCare. Let's get rid of that preexisting condition provision, and let those insurance companies deny coverage.

America, is that what you want? Is that what you are looking for? Is that too much government to say to insurance companies: You can't deny children under the age of 18 health insurance coverage if they are victims of diabetes, if they have had a bout with cancer, if they have asthma? Oh, some of these folks are for the Wild West: Get government out of my life.

I will tell my colleagues this: We know sensible regulation of insurance coverage gives people peace of mind and gives families a chance to know their child with a challenge or a problem is still going to get the very best medical care.

There is something called lifetime limits, which is another change. You go to the doctor, and the doctor says: Well, sorry to tell you, but you have been diagnosed with a form of cancer. We can treat it. It is going to take aggressive chemo, radiation, maybe even surgery. It is going to take some time, and it is going to cost some money, but at the end of the day we are going to save your life, and you are going to live. You are going to live to see your daughter's wedding, and you are going to live to see your grandchildren.

Then you get into it. You say: I am determined, my family is with me. I am going to pray for it and get the right outcome.

Guess what happens. It turns out the cost blows the lid off your health insurance coverage. You had a lifetime limit on how much they would pay, which you never thought you would use until that diagnosis came down. So now we have basically said we are removing lifetime limits on health care. That is part of ObamaCare. That is part of the affordable care act.

So I say to my Republican friends and those running for President: You want to go to the American Cancer Society and enter into a debate with them about whether lifetime limits are the right thing to do? They are going to explain to you thousands and thousands of American examples of why people with lifetime limits end up in a tragic situation where they need more coverage, they need more care. Their lives can be saved, but their health care coverage is cut off. That was the old days. That was before the affordable care act.

So those who want to repeal it stand up and get cheering crowds. In those cheering crowds are cancer patients. They ought to stop and think before they start cheering and know what they are cheering for.

The affordable care act is a sensible, reasonable step in a direction toward containing health care costs and making health care insurance coverage fairer for Americans all across our Nation.

Is it a perfect law? Of course not. As I have said many times, the only perfect law I am aware of was carried down a mountain on clay tablets by Senator Moses. Ever since, we have done our best. We can always do better, and I am open to change, I am open to improvement. But for those who want to walk away from the affordable care act, listen to what they are walking away from.

They are imposing a $1,000 premium on families to pay for the uninsured who will not accept their personal responsibility to buy health insurance. They are walking away from helping seniors pay for their Medicare prescription drugs. They are turning their back on families with young children fresh out of college looking for jobs, with no health insurance coverage. They are inviting the insurance companies to once again turn down your child and your family because of a preexisting condition. They are saying, once again: Let's get into the world of lifetime limits on insurance no matter how much health care costs.

That is their idea of a future—not mine, not my family's. I have lived through part of this. Many others have as well. So when you hear their cheering crowds about repealing the affordable care act, hoping the Supreme Court finds some aspect unconstitutional, step back and ask those cheering crowds about their own health insurance.

The last thing I want to say is this. It is interesting that Senators are debating this. You ought to see our health insurance. You ought to see what we have as Members of Congress. We have the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. Guess what. It is a government-administered program. Oh, my goodness. You mean Republican Senators are part of a government-administered health care program? Yes. And you mean to tell me they have to deal with an insurance exchange? Yes. That is what the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program is.

Eight million Federal employees and their families choose once a year—in my case from nine different plans that cover Illinois. We like our coverage in my family. Federal employees like their coverage. Senators like their coverage. But when it comes to extending this same benefit to every other American, oh, what a horror story; that is too much government. Really? If you are a person of principle and believe a government-administered health care plan is too much government, step up here in the well and tell people: I am giving up my Federal health insurance. I have not heard a single Republican Senator say that—not one. So let's find out. When we come down to the question about health care insurance for all Americans, I think they deserve at least the kind of coverage that Members of Congress have.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

JOBS ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, for the past several months, I and others have been calling on the Democratic majority here in the Senate to take up and pass the various bipartisan jobs bills that House Republicans have been sending across the dome. These bills on their own certainly will not

solve the jobs crisis, but they will make it a lot easier for entrepreneurs and innovators to get the capital they need to build businesses and create jobs. And because these bills are more concerned with getting Washington out of the way than getting it more involved, these bills also send an important message that the economy and the country are a lot better off when folks have more control over their economic destinies, not less.

Last night, we were on the cusp of passing a collection of bills known as the JOBS Act. This bill had overwhelming bipartisan support in the House. Nearly 400 Members voted for it. And the President himself says it will create jobs, he supports it and would sign it into law.

Unfortunately, a handful of Democrats here in the Senate wants to slow it down. They denied Americans this bipartisan victory for jobs that we could have had last night.

So this morning I would ask our friends on the other side to reconsider. I would ask them to put the politics aside and allow this bipartisan bill to actually move forward. We could pocket this achievement and move on to other measures, including the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank, which I suggested yesterday. One bill alone cannot undo the damage inflicted on the economy by this administration, but it sure could help, and we need to show the American people we can do this.

This bill is exactly the kind of thing Americans have been asking for: greater freedom and greater flexibility. That is one of the reasons it has had such overwhelming bipartisan support. At a moment when millions are looking for work and Democrats say they want more bipartisan action on jobs, this is it.

We are in the middle of March Madness here. To use a basketball metaphor: This is a layup. Let's get it done.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, this week marks the 2-year anniversary of the President's health care law—one that is often described as his signature legislative achievement. But you would not know it based on the President's schedule this week. For a President who is not particularly shy about taking credit even for things he did not have anything to do with, he is curiously silent this week about a bill he talked about for more than a year before it passed. According to news reports, the President does not even plan to mark the occasion.

Well, we are happy—Republicans are very happy—to talk about it for him, even though he is reluctant. We are happy to point out the ways in which this law has failed to live up to the promises the President made about it. We are happy to make the case for why this unconstitutional infringement on America's liberties needs to be repealed and replaced with the kind of commonsense reforms Americans actually want.

Two years ago, then-Speaker PELOSI said:

> We have to pass the bill so that you can find out what is in it.

Well, 2 years later, here is what we have found so far.

The Democrats' health care law has led and will continue to lead to higher costs and hundreds of thousands of fewer jobs over the next decade.

We now know it is loaded with broken promises, such as the one the President made over and over during the health care debate. He said:

> If you like your current plan, you will be able to keep it.

According to the independent Congressional Budget Office, 3 million to 5 million Americans will lose their current plan each year under the most likely scenario.

The health care law will strip billions out of Medicare and increase the Medicaid rolls in States by nearly 25 million, costing already cash-strapped States an additional $118 billion and almost certainly lowering the quality of care for millions of Americans who depend on this vital program.

In my State of Kentucky, an estimated 387,000 more people will be forced into Medicaid—at a time when Kentucky's Medicaid Program is already facing huge deficits just trying to provide benefits to current Medicaid recipients. As a result of this law, more than a million Kentuckians or 29 percent of my State's population will soon be on Medicaid. Kentucky's Governor, a Democrat, is on record saying he has no idea—no idea—how Kentucky will meet its responsibilities if the law forces several hundred thousand more people into the State's Medicaid Program. The math simply does not add up.

This is just one example of how the law is unsustainable and hurts the most vulnerable the most. The bottom line is this: This health care law is an absolute mess—a mess—and the American people do not want it. According to a Washington Post-ABC News poll out this week, more than a half of Americans do not like it—a figure that has not changed much at all since the Democrats forced it through Congress 2 years go. Two-thirds believe the Supreme Court should throw out the individual mandate or the whole law.

When it comes to the cost of health care, this law makes everything worse. Two and a half years ago, the President said his health care plan would ''slow the growth of health care costs for our families, our businesses, and our government.'' Yet the Obama administration itself now admits total spending on health care will increase by $311 billion under the President's health care law. According to the CBO, it increases net Federal health spending and subsidies on health care by $390 billion, and drives up premiums on families by $2,100 per year.

Americans wanted lower costs and to have more control of their health care decisions, and they got the opposite instead. They wanted lower premiums; they got higher premiums. They wanted a government that lives within its means, and they got a new entitlement instead. They wanted more options; they got fewer. They wanted better care; it is going to be worse. That is why Americans want this bill repealed.

Look, this bill would be unconstitutional even if it did the things the President said it would. But the fact that it did the opposite of what he promised means it should be repealed either way, whether the constitutionality of it is upheld or not.

It should say something when the President himself is not talking about this bill except in closed campaign events.

It is time to repeal this bill and replace it with the kind of commonsense reforms people want—reforms that actually lower costs, protect jobs and State budgets, and return health care decisions back to individuals and their doctors. That is a reform that both parties and all Americans could support.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, those who have followed this debate know Members can disagree, and, obviously, I disagree with the Republican leader on the issue of health care reform. I would say there are a couple elements I would add.

Yes, we expand the Medicaid rolls. That is health insurance for those in low-income categories. But the Federal Government picks up the tab. It is not an added expense to the State governments for 4 or 5 years, and we are hoping their economy gets better.

What about the 1 million Kentuckians who are going on the Medicaid rolls? Those 1 million Kentuckians have no health insurance today. Will they ever get sick? Will they show up at a hospital? Yes, they will. Who will pay for their bills? The rest of the folks living in Kentucky with health insurance and the rest of us.

Is that fair? Do these people have a personal responsibility to have health insurance, as long as we help them, if they are in lower income categories, pay the premiums with tax breaks and enrolling them in Medicaid? Of course they do.

Accepting personal responsibility used to be the first thing the Republicans told us about their family values. Why don't people have to accept personal responsibility and have health insurance so the cost of their care is not borne by their neighbors and the rest of America?

Let me also add again, Members of the U.S. Senate have a government-administered health care program that

protects them, their family, and their children. They sign up for it every single year. Not a single one has come to the well here and said: I am so opposed to government-administered programs I am going to stop enrolling in the health insurance program for Members of Congress—not a one.

JOB CREATION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I see my colleague from Colorado is on the floor, and he is going to speak to an amendment which is very important. The Republican leader addressed an aspect of it. I will make a brief comment.

If we want to create jobs in this country, we know how to do it. We passed a bill here last week, 74 to 22—a bipartisan bill. What a miracle. A bipartisan bill passes the Senate, a bill that would create 2.6 million, maybe 2.8 million jobs—create and save that many jobs in this economy—a bill that will help the American economy expand in the 21st century. What could it possibly be? It is called the Federal transportation bill. We do it every 5 years. If we do not do it—if we do not build the roads, the bridges, the airports, sustain passenger rail service and Amtrak, make certain we have mass transit and buses around America—our economy starts to contract instead of grow.

We passed this bill with a strong bipartisan vote, thanks to Senators BOXER and INHOFE. A Democrat and a Republican, a progressive and a conservative, came together on the bill. We sent it over to the House of Representatives and they said: Sorry, we are not going to take it up. We will not vote on it. We are going to send you a bill that allows people to create new startups, these new private companies, and we are going to eliminate the regulation that makes sure investors do not get fleeced. That is how we want to create jobs.

Well, that is like hoping America has amnesia. We remember the subprime mortgage mess when a lot of unsuspecting people were dragged into offices and into mortgages they had no idea were going to explode when the balloon burst.

Now, once again, the Republicans have said: The best way to create jobs in the future is to let that happen when it comes to the sale of stock in new companies. I am with Mary Schapiro, the Commissioner of the Securities and Exchange Commission. She has warned us, we need to put protections in this bill. It is not going to create the jobs they talk about. It is going to endanger investors.

I yield the floor for the Senator from Colorado.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Thank you, Madam President. And I thank the Senator from Illinois for his leadership and agree it is vital we pass the transportation bill.

CROWDFUNDING

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, in my townhalls we talk about a lot of things that are very different from what people argue about in this place. One of the issues we talk about is the economy. And we talk about these four lines, as shown on this chart.

The first line is our gross domestic product, the economic output of the United States of America, which is higher today than it was before we went into this recession. A lot of people do not know that. We are producing more than we were producing before we went into the recession.

Our productivity has gone up dramatically since the early 1990s, as we have responded to competition from China and India and other places, as we have used technology to enhance our economic output. We have the most productive economy we have ever seen.

But we also face some very potentially catastrophic circumstances in this economy, one of which is that median family income has fallen for the last 10 years—the first time that has happened in our country's history.

And the other is that we have 23 or 24 million people who are unemployed or underemployed in an economy that is producing what it was producing before the recession happened. That is a structural issue. I have spoken on this floor about the importance of education in that context because the worst the unemployment rate ever got for people with a college degree during the worst recession since the Great Depression was 4½ percent. That is a pretty good stress test of the value of a college education.

The other thing we need to make sure we are doing as a country is continuing to innovate and drive innovation across the United States because it is those companies—the ones that are created tomorrow, the ones that are created next week—that are going to create new jobs in this country. That is going to drive our median family income up instead of down.

That is why I am on the floor today to talk about a bipartisan bill, a bill Senator MERKLEY and Senator BROWN and I have worked on, on crowdfunding. It is an amendment that I hope will come to the floor. I hope we can get to a vote. Over the past months, we have worked together in a bipartisan way on a crowdfunding proposal that would allow crowdfunding to thrive but would also create an appropriate level of oversight and investor protection.

We have done something very unusual in this town: we took time to listen to people. We listened to crowdfunding platforms, entrepreneurs, and investor protection advocates. Many of them support this bill and have endorsed this bill. We worked hard to incorporate their ideas. As a result, we have a bipartisan amendment that has the support of both businesses and consumer advocates. That is something which does not happen frequently in this town.

I hope we will have a chance to vote on it. I will urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to see this as a real opportunity to take one step—not a huge step but one important step—forward to filling this gap we see, to creating an economy again where rising economic output also means rising wages, and that rising economic output also means growing jobs. This crowdfunding amendment is a chance to do it. It is bipartisan.

I have some letters of support, and I ask unanimous consent that they be printed in the RECORD.

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

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2012.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID AND MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL: The National Small Business Association (NSBA) supports the Capital Raising Online While Deterring Fraud and Unethical Non-Disclosure Act of 2012 (CROWDFUND Act, S. 2190), which would promote entrepreneurship, job creation and economic growth by making it much easier for small companies to raise capital and get new ideas off the ground. This legislation represents a reasonable effort to accommodate differing points of view and to move this important idea forward.

Representing over 150,000 small-business owners across the nation, NSBA is the country's oldest small-business advocacy organization and greatly appreciates your leadership on such an important issue for America's entrepreneurs and small-business community.

This legislation creates a crowdfunding exemption allowing a company to raise up to $1 million with reasonable per investor limits. It also pre-empts state level registration requirements, which is critical if crowdfunding legislation is to have a meaningful positive impact. Furthermore, it adds additional regulations designed to safeguard investors.

Under current law, equity markets are largely closed to entrepreneurs and small businesses because they are generally only permitted to raise capital from people with whom they have a pre-existing relationship or through investment bankers who demand a large share of the company for their services. Even private placements (usually Regulation D offerings) involve high legal fees and generally require that the offering be limited to accredited investors (those with incomes over $300,000 or a residence exclusive net worth over $1 million).

The costs associated with starting and growing a business are significant. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), from March 2009–March 2010, only 505,473 new businesses were created in the United States, the lowest rate of growth since the BLS started compiling data. This bill would facilitate job creation, incentivize entrepreneurs, and promote long term economic growth.

Despite our general support for S. 2190, there are a few areas where we hope this legislation could be further improved as it moves forward:

We would hope and recommend that the $1 million annual limit could be increased to $2

million in conference. There are many small business ideas that require more than $1 million to get off the ground.

Although we regard most of the investor safeguards as reasonable, there are a few provisions that we believe should be amended, as they may increase legal risk and administrative costs considerably. In particular, the provision requiring an explanation of the valuation method used by the issuer creates substantial legal risk and uncertainty since in retrospect almost any valuation method will prove incorrect. It is not clear what ''valuation'' would meet this requirement and protect issuers from litigation risk given the fact that any valuation is going to prove wrong either on the upside or, more relevantly, on the downside.

In addition, the provisions granting the Securities and Exchange Commission almost unfettered discretion to issue additional regulations governing crowdfunding could prove highly problematic. The legislation should contain a provision limiting this discretion and requiring the Commission to consider the costs of any additional regulation and its likely impact on the crowdfunding marketplace.

Small businesses are America's economic engine and are the most dynamic and innovative sector of the U.S. economy. They comprise 99.7% of all domestic employer firms, employ approximately 50% of all private sector employees, and have created roughly 65% of America's new net jobs over the past 17 years.

NSBA is pleased to support the Capital Raising Online While Deterring Fraud and Unethical Non-Disclosure Act of 2012 (CROWDFUND Act, S. 2190) and thanks Senators Merkley, Bennet, Brown and Landrieu for their tireless efforts to improve small-business capital access. We look forward to working with you to address the concerns outlined and, ultimately, together help to enact this critical piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

TODD O. MCCRACKEN,
President.

SOMOLEND,
Cincinnati, OH, March 16, 2012.

Senator JEFF MERKLEY,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MERKLEY: It is with great pleasure that I, on behalf of my company, SoMoLend, write to you today in support of your most recent compromise bill with Senators Brown and Bennett. As a platform that has been developed to eventually allow peer to peer lending (debt only), we applaud your efforts to allow for new small business borrowing opportunities while also protecting the lender and borrower.

Specifically, we appreciate the language that lifts the financial limits on investment to be robust enough to support the borrower industries we serve. Additionally, the new disclosure/regulatory requirements are robust enough to provide guidance to a new industry, but will also benefit the crowd-funding industry in the long-term (as compared to a possible race to the bottom with a ''no regulatory'' approach). Finally, we believe the disclosure/regulatory requirements will provide adequate information to investors, advising of risk but also deterring fraud. Again, this has long-term benefits to the industry as a whole.

We also recognize a shift from your original bill and thank you for removing the requirement for audited and reviewed financials for businesses raising small amounts of money, as this requirement would have been so cost-prohibitive that it would have served as a dis-incentive for small business participation.

While I believe that your legislation is much stronger than previous bills, I do still have concerns regarding requirements that do not adequately consider the different role debt plays in the capital structure, and hope that we have the opportunity to address these differences in the rule making process (we appreciate your guidance in drafting potential legislative history to this effect). We also believe that the current requirements still take a one size fits all approach, and we ask that the rule makers consider the cost/benefit of additional disclosure for very small offerings. In addition, the existing requirement for portals to belong to a national securities association provides a potential obstacle to our industry (time/cost), with no real benefit, since existing associations do not have any specific rules for crowd funding sites. We do realize, however, that our industry will need to quickly form its own self-regulatory association.

We believe that rule making should permit portals/issuers to rely on investor representations to comply with funding limits. Finally, the rule making process with the Securities and Exchange Commission will take time—we believe that someone should address what occurs in transition.

Overall, we are very supportive of your most recent legislation, and we are happy to help in any way to assist in advocating its passage.

Please let me know if I can do any more to be of assistance, and we look forward to working with your team to create an exciting new opportunity for small business access to capital.

Sincerely,

CANDACE KLEIN,
Founder/CEO.

FUND DEMOCRACY,
March 14, 2012.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID AND MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL: I am writing on behalf of Fund Democracy to express my support for the Capital Raising Online While Deterring Fraud and Unethical Disclosure Act of 2012 (''CROWDFUND Act''). As the Act's title suggests, an exemption from registration requirements for very small securities offerings creates significant potential for fraud and unethical conduct. The CROWDFUND Act addresses this concern by providing significant regulatory relief to very small issuers without unreasonably compromising the investor protection provisions on which the federal securities laws are grounded and the long-term success of the U.S. securities markets has been based.

In particular, I note the substantial improvements over the crowdfunding exemption contained in Title III of the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act (''JOBS Act'') recently approved by the House. The JOBS Act's crowdfunding exemption, aptly referred to by Columbia Law School Professor John Coffee as the ''The Boiler Room Legalization Act,'' removes fundamental investor protection measures that are essential to the successful operation of the U.S. securities markets.

Most notably, the JOBS Act would grant broker-dealers who act as intermediaries in crowdfunding offerings a complete exemption from registration as brokers. Such an exemption is grossly overbroad and removes an entire regulatory structure for precisely the kind of small offerings where experience has demonstrated a high risk of fraud. In contrast, the CROWDFUND Act provides a reasonable alternative to broker registration by permitting crowdfunding intermediaries to be lightly regulated as ''funding portals.'' These portals would continue to be subject to essential investor protection rules while relieving them of regulation that is unnecessary in the crowdfunding context.

Furthermore, the CROWDFUND Act requires that issuers provide appropriately limited financial disclosures depending on the size of the offering, whereas the JOBS Act provides a one-size-fits-all blanket exemption from providing any financial information for offerings of up to $1 million. The CROWDFUND Act also provides regulators with 21-day advance notice of crowdfunding offerings. In contrast, the JOBS Act allows for notice with the making of the first offer, at which point regulatory action will often be too late.

Notwithstanding the CROWDFUND Act's significant improvements over the JOBS Act's crowdfunding exemption, I remain concerned regarding the potential for fraud in crowdfunding markets. I strongly encourage the reconsideration of the $2,000 investment limit as applied to low-income individuals and recommend that investments not exceed the greater of $500 or 5% of income. I also encourage a thoroughgoing re-evaluation of the operation of the crowdfunding exemption in practice following the delivery of each of the SEC reports required in Section 6 of the Act.

In conclusion, I applaud the CROWDFUND Act's reasonable balancing of the costs of raising capital for the smallest issuers, and the benefits of adequately protecting both investors and the integrity of the U.S. securities markets.

Sincerely,

MERCER BULLARD,
President and Founder.

THE STARTUP EXEMPTION,
Miami Beach, FL, March 14, 2012.

Senator HARRY REID,
Senate Majority Leader, Hart Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: We began this process over a year ago with the goal of creating a system under which entrepreneurs can raise capital to create jobs. We understand there are major differences between the House and Senate versions of the Crowdfunding bills and we desire for the Senate Banking Committee to have a chance to work these issues out there so that both Houses of Congress can pass this legislation.

In January 2011, we proposed the regulatory framework, which is the basis for all the Crowdfunding bills currently under consideration in Washington, DC. After a year of dedicated work we are comforted by the fact that the Senate, House and President understand how important capital is to our nation's entrepreneurs for innovation and job creation. The passage of the House Crowdfunding Bill (H.R. 2930), coupled with the President's very strong leadership and support was a great demonstration of bipartisanship. The active debate in the Senate, further reinforces the commitment to updating securities regulations that were written at a time when we didn't have the technology to better enable the free flow of information and investor protection. Once legalized, Crowdfund Investing (CFI) will allow a limited amount of community-based capital to flow into the hands of our nation's job creators and innovators, while providing prudent investor protections.

We are three successful MBA entrepreneurs having raised in excess of $100M in venture and private equity capital and deeply understand the capital markets, and their risks and rewards. In drafting our framework, we worked hard to balance the interests of the

entrepreneur, investor, intermediary and regulator. We endorsed H.R. 2930, as it is aligned with our framework. Since then, we worked closely with the Senate to understand their concerns and work on a bill to include provisions that can yield bipartisan support while creating an regulatory environment in which a Crowdfund Investing industry can grow and succeed.

It is with this in mind that we write to suggest that if you consider the House version of the bill you consider adding the following crucial components:

1. Crowdfund Investing intermediaries that are SEC-regulated to provide appropriate oversight
2. All or nothing financing so that an entrepreneur must hit 100% of his funding target or no funds will be exchanged
3. State notification, rather than state registration, so the states are aware of who is crowdfunding in their states. This ensures they retain their enforcement ability while creating an efficient marketplace.

Senators Merkley, Bennett, Brown and Landrieu should be commended for their thoughtfulness in crafting a bipartisan compromise bill. Passage of Crowdfund Investing legislation this session will create the American jobs and innovation that our economy so desperately needs. Please consider taking up this bill.

Sincerely,

SHERWOOD NEISS, JASON BEST &
ZAK CASSADY-DORION,
Co-founders.

MARCH 15, 2012.

Senator HARRY REID,
Senate Majority Leader, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: I write to express support for the bipartisan CROWDFUND Act recently proposed by Senators Merkley, S. Brown, Bennet and Landrieu.

CrowdCheck, Inc. was formed to support entrepreneurs seeking crowdfunding by giving them a way to establish their legitimacy in a field that many have predicted will be vulnerable to fraud, and to give investors a tool to recognize and avoid fraud. Our founders include several business lawyers, and I am a securities lawyer with three decades of experience helping companies comply with SEC disclosure requirements. I thus understand the burdens such regulations can impose on entrepreneurs, and also the information investors need to make an informed investment decision. I am therefore pleased to see the careful balance in the bill between investor protection and burden on the entrepreneur.

While we have some concerns with respect to interpretation of certain provisions in the bill, we look forward to working with the sponsors of the bill to address these. We therefore urge you to support this bipartisan effort to pass the CROWDFUND Act.

Sincerely,

SARA HANKS,
CEO, CrowdCheck, Inc.

Mr. BENNET. It moves this ball down the field. I hope it establishes a model for how we can work together to make sure that we are actually addressing things I am hearing about in the townhalls and that we are driving wage growth and job growth here in the United States.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, are we in morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. We are.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I rise to speak on the second-year anniversary of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care law. I will be joined shortly by a few of my colleagues. I ask unanimous consent that at that point we engage in a colloquy.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, on Friday of this week 2 years will have passed since President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act into law. This is actually a sad anniversary because more than enough time has gone by to reveal the failures of this massive, burdensome piece of legislation.

The fact that 26 of our 50 States—more than half of the States—are part of the legal challenge currently under review by the Supreme Court points out the inevitable truth: This is a law that simply does not work.

The case that will be heard in a few days will be one of the most consequential Supreme Court cases of my lifetime—consequential not only because it deals with this massive, burdensome piece of legislation but because the implications go so much further. The Supreme Court case will decide the scope of the commerce clause. Indeed, my colleagues, if the Supreme Court decides this law can withstand constitutional scrutiny, then this large, massive Federal Government can, in fact, do almost anything, and there will be hardly any limitations under the Constitution and the Bill of Rights on the power of the U.S. Federal Government.

Americans are right to be disappointed with Obamacare, and they are right to want it repealed. And regardless of the outcome of the Supreme Court case, this Congress can decide and, as a matter of fact, the people of the United States will have a chance in November, as we do every 2 years, to decide.

A recent Gallup poll shows that twice as many Americans think the law will make things worse for their families than those who believe it will make things better. Seventy-two percent of Americans believe the individual mandate is unconstitutional.

The truth is that Americans deserve affordable, high-quality health care, not a 2,700-page, big-government piece of legislation that taxes, spends, and regulates. The President's health care law has not lowered the cost of health care as promised. It has not created jobs as promised. It has not reduced the deficit as promised. So this week we mark the anniversary not with progress but with bitter realities.

President Obama, in his joint session speech to Congress in 2009, asserted that his plan ''will slow the growth of health care costs for our families, our businesses, and our government.'' In fact, last week the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office and Joint Committee on Taxation updated their outlook of the health care law's impact on the Federal budget. Not surprisingly, their latest analysis says Obamacare will cost even more than anticipated. And the anticipated costs were high, indeed, but they say the health care law will cost nearly $1.8 trillion over the next decade or double the estimated cost that accompanied the bill when Democratic supermajorities passed it in 2010. This is hardly the relief President Obama promised.

During his campaign, the President said the plan would reduce health care premiums by an average of $2,500 per family. Instead, premiums have grown by nearly that much since he was elected.

I see I am joined by two of my colleagues, the distinguished Senator from Wyoming and the distinguished Senator from Kansas.

There are a number of other promises we are talking about today, and I know we don't impugn motives around here—that is against the rules—but one has to wonder, did advocates of this massive law actually believe these promises or were they simply duped and misled? And I don't know which is worse, but I know that my colleague Dr. BARRASSO, himself a physician who is on the front line of this issue, has given this a great deal of thought, so at this point I ask him to join in this colloquy.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I stand here with my friend and colleague from Mississippi because he and I both attended, in his home State of Mississippi, a meeting at a hospital where we met with doctors, also met with patients, and met with people from the community while the debate and discussion was being conducted about this health care law. At the time, people were asking all sorts of questions because they had heard the promises. Would this actually lower the cost of insurance by $2,500 a family? That is what people wanted. That is what they expected. The other question: Will I really be able to keep the care I have and the doctor I have if I like it?

Now here we are a couple of years later, the second anniversary of this health care law being passed, and I am here with my friend and colleague from Mississippi, and it just seems to me that the questions that were asked by his constituents, by the doctors in those communities who take care of the patients, by the patients, the hospital administrators whom we talked to that day in his home State of Mississippi—it does seem that many of these promises have been broken.

The costs seem to go up higher than had this health care law not been passed at all. The numbers and the statistics we are hearing now from the budget office on the cost seem to be much, much higher than what the

President promised. Parts of this health care law—the so-called CLASS Act—it now comes out were accounting gimmicks, budget schemes to make it seem as though the cost of this health care law would be much less than what American people now know it to be.

So it is no surprise to me—and I see this in Wyoming, and I am sure the Senator sees it in Mississippi, and I would imagine the Senator from Kansas who is on the floor has seen the same thing at home because I know he has gone to hospitals and just—maybe almost every hospital in the State of Kansas as he has traveled around. We are all seeing that this health care law is less popular now than when it was passed. That is what I hear at townhall meetings. When I ask, do you think you are actually going to pay more under the health care law, every hand goes up. And when I say, do you think the quality and availability of your own care at home is going to go down, again, every hand goes up.

So if I could ask my colleague from Kansas if he is hearing the same things. And I see we are also joined by the Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MORAN. I appreciate the opportunity to be on the floor today, especially with the Senator from Wyoming, a doctor who is such an expert on the topic of really not just the moment, not just the day, but the topic of what our country faces.

I will say that I do spend a lot of time in hospitals across our State talking to health care providers, talking to patients, doctors, to administrators, trustees. In fact, there are 128 hospitals in our State. I have visited all of them, and there is genuine concern about the future of the ability for health care to be delivered in communities across our State. And you add to that the physician and other health care provider community, and this health care reform act is creating significant challenges.

My interest in public service started a long time ago with the belief that we live our lives in rural America, in my State of Kansas, in a pretty special way. When I came to Congress, it became clear to me that if our communities were going to have a future, it was dependent upon the ability to deliver health care close to home. And those rural communities across our Nation often have high proportions of senior citizen populations where Medicare is the primary determining factor of whether they can access health care.

When the affordable care act was passed, many promises were made, but one of the things that was told to the American people—or at least the attempt was made to sell to the American people—was that there would be greater access. And I would certainly say that one of the promises that is not being kept about the affordable care act is the likelihood that there is going to be greater access for Americans across our country to health care because this bill is underfunded, it is not paid for. The consequences are that the administration is already proposing and Congress will always be looking for ways to reduce spending when it comes to health care, and the most likely target is the payment Medicare makes to health care providers, which in many instances already doesn't cover the cost for providing the service. So when we look for access to health care, every time we make a decision, every time a decision will be made in order to try to make this more affordable, we are going to see fewer and fewer providers able to provide the services necessary to folks across the country but especially in rural communities where 60, 70, 80, even 90 percent of the patients admitted to the hospital are on Medicare.

So one of the problems with the affordable care act is the reality that it will reduce access to health care for people who live in rural America and we will see fewer physicians accepting patients on Medicare, we will see fewer hospital doors remain open; as this bill takes $500 billion out of Medicare to begin with, the Congress that passed and the President who signed this legislation set the stage for there to be less affordable health care available to Americans across the country but especially for constituents of mine who live in a rural State such as Kansas.

Mr. WICKER. If I could jump in on the issue of Medicare because I have a quote here from President Obama, July 29, 2009: ''Medicare is a government program, but do not worry, I am not going touch it.'' As a matter of fact, only months later he signed into law Obamacare, which takes $½ trillion from Medicare. And it touches on the very issue the Senator from Kansas was referring to with regard to Medicare access for people in rural Kansas.

Mr. McCAIN. Madam President, I might point out to my friend from Mississippi that the first amendment we had on the floor of the Senate when we were considering ObamaCare was to restore that $500 billion, and it was voted down on a party-line basis.

I thank my friends for allowing me to engage in this colloquy. I want to discuss this with my friends. In my view, probably what encapsulates the problems with this legislation—the commitment began that we would provide affordable health care to all Americans, which meant we had to put the brakes on inflation in health care because health care was becoming unaffordable—the highest quality health care in the world. Nothing, in my view—and I ask my colleagues this—describes more how this whole plan went awry than the so-called CLASS Act.

Late in the debate, the CLASS Act was thrown in to provide long-term care for seniors, which seems like a worthy cause, but the whole thing was a gimmick. It was described by Senator CONRAD, our chairman of the Budget Committee, as a ''Ponzi scheme of the first order, the kind of thing that Bernie Madoff would have been proud of.''

They foisted that off on us. Why? Initially, because of CBO scoring, it would show an increase in finances into revenues and into the whole ObamaCare program. But as soon as those people who were paying in became eligible, obviously, the reverse happened. Thank God for former Senator Gregg of New Hampshire, who had an amendment adopted that required the Secretary to certify that the program would be solvent for over 75 years before the program could be implemented. If it hadn't been for that, the CLASS Act would be here today.

Then, last October, the Secretary of Health and Human Services issued a report confirming what many of us knew was inevitable: that the Secretary could not certify the CLASS Act's solvency as required under law. So we went through this exercise of frantically searching for ways to increase revenue, at least the way CBO does scoring. So we did the CLASS Act and, thank God, Senator Gregg of New Hampshire put in an amendment that they had to certify that it would be viable over 75 years. There was not a snowball's chance in Gila Bend, AZ, that they were able to certify that for over 75 years it would be a viable program.

It was kind of entertaining, but late on a Friday night the Secretary of Health and Human Services said she could not certify that the program would be solvent throughout a 75-year period. The result of this was, obviously, that they didn't have the false revenues that CBO could score. They didn't have a program that could provide long-term care for seniors. Again, as the Senator from North Dakota aptly pointed out, this ''Ponzi scheme of the first order'' faced and met a well-deserved death.

That is why an overwhelming majority of the American people disapprove of this whole exercise of ObamaCare. They want it repealed. They don't support it. I am proud to say in this election we will decide whether we repeal and replace ObamaCare. The American people care about that.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, to summarize what the Senator from Arizona has just said, the CLASS Act was sold to the American people as a budget deficit reducer. It was going to reduce the deficit. No sooner was it signed and they started looking at it that the administration itself said: We know it is unworkable, and we abandon it. We are not even going to try to enforce it.

Mr. McCAIN. They could have kept it on the books. If it had not been for the amendment of Senator Gregg from New Hampshire which said they had to certify its solvency over a 75-year period, we would have the CLASS Act today, a Ponzi scheme where people would be paying in, and that is scored as revenues, and some years later when they retire, obviously, the reverse would have been true.

I have yet to hear one of my colleagues come over and admit that they

were wrong about the CLASS Act. I would love to hear some of those who strongly advocated for it. My friend from Iowa, Senator HARKIN, said:

So we get a lot of bang for the buck, as one might say, with the CLASS Act that we have in this bill.

Senator WHITEHOUSE said this:

Certain colleagues on the other side of the aisle have argued that the CLASS plan would lead to a financially unstable entitlement program and would rapidly increase the Federal deficit. That is simply not accurate.

I look forward to my colleagues who supported and voted for the CLASS Act to come over and agree that it was, as Senator CONRAD pointed out, a Ponzi scheme.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I know our friend from South Dakota has joined us and is eager to join in this discussion. I wonder if he has anything to add about the broken promises that were made during the passage of ObamaCare.

Mr. MCCAIN. Before that, the whole point of reforming health care was to reduce the cost of health care. That was the goal. We all know Medicare cannot be sustained for the American people if the inflation associated with health care continues. The whole object of this game was to reduce the cost of health care and preserve the quality of health care.

Does anybody think that was achieved with this legislation? That is why the American people have figured it out. I yield for the Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I echo what the Senator from Arizona said about the CLASS Act. He was here, as was I and many others, debating this bill and saying this was a program destined to be bankrupt. In fact, if we look at the independent Actuary, he was saying the CLASS Act was unworkable. They said it would collapse in short order.

Within the HHS Department, there was a nonpartisan career staff that called it a ''recipe for disaster.'' There was plenty of advance warning this wasn't going to work.

The Senator from Arizona correctly pointed out it was used as a gimmick to make the overall cost look less and, therefore, bring it into balance. As we know now, the CLASS Act could not work. They have had to acknowledge that, and the amendment put on by Senator Gregg, which would have forced them to certify, made that abundantly clear.

To the point of the Senator from Mississippi, the purpose of the exercise was that we have to do something about the cost of health care. In fact, the President of the United States, when he was running, said this:

If you've got health insurance, we are going to work with you to lower your premiums by $2,500 per family per year. We will not wait 20 years from now to do it, or 10 years from now to do it; we will do it by the end of my first term as President of the United States.

I am sure the Senator from Arizona probably remembers very well many of these statements. But the facts tell a different story. If we look at what health care costs are doing, and even what was predicted by the Congressional Budget Office, they said the law was going to increase health insurance premiums by 10 to 13 percent, which means families purchasing coverage were going to pay an additional $2,100 because of the new law. That has actually been borne out.

If we look at the cost of health insurance for people in this country today, it has gone up, not down; it has gone up dramatically—since the President took office, about 25 percent for most Americans. All these promises about getting costs under control, the promises about keeping what people have, the promises about this being done in a way that would protect Medicare—we all know Medicare was going to be slashed when this was fully implemented, to the tune of $1 trillion, and there would be $1 trillion in new taxes also.

The American people got a bad deal, and they know it. That is what the public opinion polls show.

Mr. MCCAIN. I ask the Senator, even though we have shut down the office of the CLASS Act, even though the Secretary of Health and Human Services said they can't certify that it will be fiscally solvent over 75 years, it is still on the books. Isn't the CLASS Act still on the books? Does the Senator think it might be appropriate, since we cannot comply with the law, to maybe repeal that portion of the law? Is that something we might think about? It might be a pretty good amendment.

Mr. THUNE. It would be, and, by the way, we have that amendment and would be happy to offer it. We tried to call up the bill, but it was objected to by the Democrats. The thing about bad ideas around here is that they tend to come back. This idea ought to be put away once and for all. Yet it is on the books, as the Senator pointed out. I don't know why, after all the evidence out there now that has been put forward, including the Health and Human Services Secretary saying this will not work. But we continue to maintain it on the books in the hopes of some in the administration, I am sure, that it can be resurrected in the future. It was a bad idea then, and it will be in the future. It just doesn't pencil out. We cannot make it work. It saddles future generations of Americans with massive amounts of debt.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, let me ask my colleagues about another promise. They will call time on us soon.

Does anybody recall hearing this statement from the President of the United States in 2009? He said this:

If you like your health care plan, you will be able to keep your health care plan, period. No one will take it away, no matter what.

That was the President on June 15, 2009. What happened to that?

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, when we look at it, even the administration admits that wasn't true. Small businesses—people who get their insurance in small businesses—will have a difficult time continuing to provide coverage for people because of the mandates that say they have to provide Washington-approved insurance. That is the problem: that people have what they like, and it may be something they want, need, and can afford. Now they are being mandated to have something they may not want, need, or be able to afford.

So, again, we have another broken promise, which is why Senator COBURN, who practiced medicine for a quarter century, as I did, and I have come out with a report, released yesterday called, ''Warning, Side Effects, a Checkup on the Federal Health Law: Fewer Choices.''

That means people cannot choose to keep what they have. There are fewer choices, higher taxes, more government, and less innovation. None of that is what the American people have been promised by the President.

Mr. MCCAIN. In addition, I ask the Senator how many new regulations have been issued, and how many new regulations do we anticipate as a result of this exercise?

Mr. BARRASSO. This over 2,000-page law will result in over 100,000 pages of regulations. There is one part of the law where, for a couple of pages—4 to 6 pages—they had 400 pages of regulations and 50 pages of legal guidance.

When we talk to hospitals—I know those of us who visit with hospitals in our States—they say they are spending money on consultants and lawyers to help them understand the law. They say: It is money we ought to spend on patients and equipment and technology for our hospital, to provide care in our community.

I know the Senator from Kansas has visited over 100 hospitals in his State. He has heard the same thing.

Mr. MORAN. That is true. The point made earlier about the goal of the legislation bending the cost curve down—it didn't do it, it doesn't do it, and it cannot do it. That created the problem we all face now. How can we have access to affordable health care if we are not reducing the cost of health care?

The end result, in my view, is that Americans will have less options for their own plans. As employers, they will provide either less options or no options for their employees. So the idea that people are going to get to keep what they have, that begins to disappear. If they are a senior citizen and Medicare has been their primary provider, we go back to the idea that we didn't bend the cost curve. So in order to make health care affordable—when the legislation fails to do that, we find other gimmicks to do that. One of the things this bill creates is IPAB, an independent agency that will make decisions about what is covered by people's health care plans. The goal will not be to have better quality health care; the goal of the IPAB will be to reduce expenditures.

As the promise was made that people get to keep what they have, it becomes totally different than what they have experienced in their health care plans—either in their own private health care insurance or as a beneficiary of Medicare. Even the President's own Medicare Actuary estimates that the law will increase overall national health care expenditures by $311 billion during the first 10 years alone, and that private health care insurance premiums will rise 10 percent in 2014.

So if we are complaining today about the increase in premium costs, there is more to come. In 2014, the Medicare Actuary says there will be another 10 percent increase in your health care premiums. At the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, their economists found the increasing growth rate in health care spending will occur in every sector of health care. More recently, the Congressional Budget Office, our neutral provider of analysis, says the cost of the health care law may be substantially higher than earlier estimated.

One of the things I would suggest we should have done and that never happened—if we want folks to be able to keep what they have, if we want access to health care in rural and urban and suburban places in the country—we should have done something about fixing permanently the reduction of payments to physicians—the so-called doc fix. One would have thought, in health care reform, that would have been front and center. Because if we don't have a physician providing a service, we don't have health care. Yet we have a Medicare system that is going to reduce the payments. In fact, expected this year, the reduced payments to physicians was going to be 30 percent.

The reality is, no longer will physicians accept Medicare patients. The option the American people were promised about keeping what they have disappears one more time. In fact, at a townhall meeting in Parsons, KS, this year, a physician in the front row said: Senator, you need to know I no longer accept Medicare and Medicaid. I will take cash, but I cannot afford to provide the services based upon the Medicare reimbursement rate I get. When you add in all the paperwork, trying to comply with Medicare and Medicaid, it is no longer financially feasible for me in this small town to provide the services my patients need under Medicare.

So we are going to see a lot less access because, once again, this is a failure. The promise that was made to bend down the cost curve, to reduce health care costs, to reduce premiums was totally false.

Mr. WICKER. So the promise was not to touch Medicare, and that promise has not been fulfilled. The promise was to reduce the deficit, and that turned out to be an empty promise.

Also, we were told by the President and by Speaker PELOSI this bill would create jobs. The President said it was a key pillar for a new foundation for prosperity. How has that turned out? Former Speaker PELOSI said in its life the health care bill will create 4 million jobs—400,000 almost immediately.

Of course, neither of those promises has come true. The nonpartisan CBO has estimated the health care law will reduce America's workforce. This is the bipartisan CBO. They said it will reduce America's workforce by 800,000 jobs over the next 10 years. That fact has been confirmed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. THUNE. I would say to my colleague from Mississippi that one of the areas where jobs may be created is in the Federal Government because it is going to take an awful lot of Federal bureaucrats to oversee and lots of new IRS agents to implement this legislation. That would be the only place we will see job creation.

But when it comes to private sector job creation, the thing about this is, it raises the cost for health insurance coverage for employers, and it raises taxes on a lot of people who are involved in health care.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority's time has expired.

Mr. THUNE. The combination of those things is only going to cost jobs.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, how much time remains on our side?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 7½ minutes.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I would like to be notified when I have 1 minute remaining.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair will so advise.

Mr. HARKIN. I appreciate that.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, 2 years ago President Obama signed into law what I believe was the most forward-thinking and humane reform of our health care system since Medicare. Just like the Republicans opposed Medicare when it came in, they still want to get rid of it. If we look at the Ryan budget that came out, what do they want to do? They want to privatize Medicare. They have been at it ever since. They do not want this humane reform we passed 2 years ago.

When the affordable care act became law, I said we have made America a more compassionate and a more just society. I believe this with even greater conviction now. In listening to my colleagues, my friends on the other side of the aisle, one would think this is all just about little nuts and bolts and this and that, but it is about humaneness. It is about compassion and about justice and, yes, it is about making the system work better for patients, not just for insurance companies and the insurance industry.

Now that we have moved ahead to implement the law, the results have been striking. Every American now is protected against the abusive insurance company practices of the past. Let me put it another way. Because of the health care reform law, Americans now have protections that every Senator in this Chamber has enjoyed for years under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. We now have extended that to all Americans. Listening to my friends on the other side of the aisle, they want to take it away from Americans but keep it for themselves. Oh, no; they do not want to give it up. I think what is good for Senators ought to be good for the American people.

The young lady shown on this chart is Emily Schlichting. She testified before my committee last year, and this is what she said:

> Young people are the future of this country and we are the most affected by reform—we're the generation that is most uninsured. We need the Affordable Care Act because it is literally an investment in the future of this country.

Why does she say that? Because she suffers from a rare autoimmune condition which insurance companies would not even cover. But because we have said they cannot now discriminate if someone has a preexisting condition, Emily gets insurance coverage. Plus, she can stay on her parents' health insurance program.

So far, the law has extended coverage to more than 2½ million young people such as Emily. Yet the Republicans want to take it away. They want to take away Emily Schlichting's insurance coverage. That is what this is all about. They want to repeal the affordable care act—ObamaCare. What that will mean is that 2½ million people similar to Emily will lose their insurance. But they do not talk about that. They do not talk about that.

Here is the coverage Americans have right now. We have banned lifetime limits. Let me tell everyone about Ross Daniels and Amy Ward from West Des Moines, IA. After developing a rare lung infection on a summer trip, Amy needed intensive treatment, including a course of medication costing—get this—$1,600 a dose—$1,600 a dose. Her insurance policy had a $1 million lifetime limit. Without our health care reform's ban on lifetime limits, this couple would have had to declare bankruptcy. After this experience, Ross said he can't understand why opponents of the law want to repeal it. He said:

> It is hard for us to believe that so many of the GOP candidates would have us go back in time where an illness like this would have forced us, or any other family for that matter, into bankruptcy.

Listen to what Republicans are saying. They want to take this protection away from Amy Ward and Ross Daniels and millions of other Americans. There are 100 million people being helped by the ban on lifetime limits.

We have also covered vital preventive services free of charge. That has benefited more than 80 million people who

now get free preventive care. It allows young people to remain on their parents' insurance plans until they are age 26. I can't tell you how many families I have talked to in my State of Iowa who have said this has been a godsend to them and to their kids.

Here is the preventive portion. We all know prevention is the best thing we can do to change our sick care system into a health care system. Here is what we did. Here is what the affordable care act does on prevention. Before health care reform, colorectal cancer screening was covered only 68 percent by insurance companies, cholesterol screening was only covered by 57 percent, tobacco cessation only 4 percent. Under the affordable care act, colorectal cancer screening, cholesterol, and tobacco cessation all are covered at 100 percent by every insurance company. Madam President, 100 hundred percent, not 57 percent or 68 percent but 100 percent. We all know that early screening means people live longer and it cuts down on health care costs.

So millions now receive free preventive care, and 86 million Americans had at least one free preventive service in 2011. Almost 1 million Iowans, in my State, received at least one free preventive service in 2011. Yet Republicans want to take this away. That is what this is about.

But Americans now have preventive care. They now are able to keep their kids on their policies until they are age 26. They now have a ban on lifetime limits. We now have a ban for children up to age 19 on preexisting conditions. That is all they want to do; they want to take this away. I say, don't let them take this away from the American people.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has 50 seconds remaining.

Mr. HARKIN. I yield the remainder of my time to the Senator from Michigan.

JOBS ACT

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, in a few minutes, we are going to vote on whether we should end debate on a House bill which carries the false label of a jobs bill—a bill which cries out for debate and amendment.

If we continue down this track, we will approve legislation that endangers America's senior citizens, its small investors, and its large pension funds and foundations. In doing so, we would, far from encouraging job growth, endanger job growth, by endangering the investments that help America's businesses grow and create new jobs. The jobs bill before us, as it now stands, is anything but a jobs bill. And if we invoke cloture, we will end debate and the opportunity to remedy this bill's flaws. The Senate should not take that step.

Its flaws are deeply worrisome. It threatens to dampen investment, and therefore dampen job growth, in at least six ways.

First, investors are now protected by federal securities laws that generally prevent companies from making largely unregulated stock offerings to the public. By limiting such unregulated stock offerings to investors who can better withstand the substantial risk of these investments, we discourage fraud while allowing companies to access capital. But the House bill does away with these restrictions. They could market them with cold calls to senior centers. This would expose Americans with few protections against fraud and little ability to analyze complex, risky investments to devastating losses.

It gets worse. The House bill changes when a company is large enough to warrant SEC disclosure and transparency requirements—from one with fewer than 500 shareholders to one with 2,000 or more shareholders, and perhaps many more. Those could be very large companies. In fact, the House bill maintains a loophole that allows shareholders of record, on paper, to hold shares for potentially hundreds of real owners as a way of evading this shareholder limit. They would be exempt from filing regular financial reports and other measures that give investors the confidence they need to invest their hard-earned dollars.

Taken together, these first two flaws would allow even large companies to make largely unregulated stock offerings to potentially unwary investors, and to evade even the most basic requirements to accurately inform shareholders of their financial condition. Combined, these provisions are a recipe for fraud, abuse, financial crisis and reduced investment to grow our economy.

The House bill has other deep flaws. It erases barriers, erected after the dotcom bubble of the 1990s, that prevent conflicts of interest in which investment banks could promote the stock offerings that they underwrite by having their research analysts provide pumped-up assessments on the stock.

This provision would mean that nearly 90 percent of all IPOs would be exempt from providing basic protections that help investors commit their money with confidence.

Now, it has been said by supporters of this bill that we should approve this bill because the President supports it. I would remind my colleagues of two things. First, the President's support would not dissolve our own responsibility. We are in danger of rubber-stamping a bill simply because someone slapped a clever acronym with the word ''jobs'' on it. If this bill threatens, rather than encourages, investment and job creation, we should repair its flaws. That is our responsibility. Madison told us two centuries ago:

> A senate, as a second branch of the legislative assembly, distinct from, and dividing the power with a first, must be in all cases a salutary check on the government.

We should be that check today.

Second, those who point to the President's support fail to mention another aspect of his position: support for common-sense fixes that protect the integrity of our markets. The White House said this week:

> The President strongly supports the efforts of Senate Democrats to find common ground by supporting the most effective aspects of the House bill to increase capital formation for growing businesses, while also improving the House bill to ensure there are sufficient safeguards to prevent abuse and protect investors.

The President supports this bill, yes—but he also supports improving it. And we should have the chance to do so.

This is not a bill to promote investment in our economy. This bill will discourage investment. As SEC Chairman Schapiro wrote:

> If the balance is tipped to the point where investors are not confident that there are appropriate protections, investors will lose confidence in our markets, and capital formation will ultimately be made more difficult and expensive.

Unless we protect investors, they will not invest in our economy. We can only add those protections if we slow this rush, debate this bill, and amend it. If we invoke cloture now, we end debate rather than beginning it. If we invoke cloture, we restrict amendment rather than allowing it. That would be a grave mistake, one that puts American investors, American workers and the stability of our economy at risk, and I urge my colleagues not to walk that path.

Again, this bill would allow companies to advertise these virtually unregulated stock offerings on television or on billboards. This House bill would allow large companies with thousands of shareholders to avoid SEC regulation. The House bill would allow banks of any size to avoid SEC regulation if they have fewer than 1,200 shareholders. The House bill would allow companies with annual sales of up to $1 billion to evade the most basic transparency, accountability, and disclosure requirements in making initial public offerings.

This is not a bill which will promote investment in our economy. This bill will discourage investment. As SEC Chairman Schapiro wrote us:

> If the balance is tipped to the point where investors are not confident that there are appropriate protections, investors will lose confidence in our markets.

That is why the Council of Institutional Investors warns us ''this legislation will likely create more risks to investors than jobs.''

This is not a bill which will allow new opportunities for American workers but one which will create new opportunities for fraudsters and boiler-room crooks. I urge defeat of cloture. We should not end debate on this bill and make it more difficult to amend this bill by restricting amendments.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

JUMPSTART OUR BUSINESS STARTUPS ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3606, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3606) to increase American job creation and economic growth by improving access to the public capital markets for emerging growth companies.

Pending:

Reid (for Reed) amendment No. 1833, in the nature of a substitute.

Reid amendment No. 1834 (to amendment No. 1833), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 1835 (to amendment No. 1834), of a perfecting nature.

Reid (for Cantwell) amendment No. 1836 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 1833), to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States.

Reid amendment No. 1837 (to amendment No. 1836), to change the enactment date.

Reid motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 1838, to change the enactment date.

CLOTURE MOTION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.R. 3606, an Act to increase American job creation and economic growth by improving access to the public capital markets for emerging growth companies.

Harry Reid, Ben Nelson, Jon Tester, Charles E. Schumer, Joe Manchin III, Patty Murray, Mark R. Warner, Christopher A. Coons, Robert Menendez, Thomas R. Carper, Joseph I. Lieberman, Debbie Stabenow, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Tom Udall, Jim Webb, Barbara Boxer.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 3606, an act to increase American job creation and economic growth by improving access to public capital markets for emerging growth companies, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 76, nays 22, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 53 Leg.]

YEAS—76

Alexander	Bennet	Brown (MA)
Ayotte	Bingaman	Burr
Barrasso	Blunt	Cantwell
Begich	Boozman	Carper
Casey	Johanns	Reid
Chambliss	Johnson (SD)	Risch
Coats	Johnson (WI)	Roberts
Coburn	Kerry	Rockefeller
Cochran	Klobuchar	Rubio
Collins	Kohl	Schumer
Coons	Kyl	Sessions
Corker	Lee	Shaheen
Cornyn	Lieberman	Shelby
DeMint	Lugar	Snowe
Durbin	Manchin	Stabenow
Enzi	McCain	Tester
Graham	McCaskill	Thune
Grassley	McConnell	Toomey
Hagan	Moran	Udall (CO)
Hatch	Murkowski	Udall (NM)
Heller	Murray	Vitter
Hoeven	Nelson (NE)	Warner
Hutchison	Nelson (FL)	Wicker
Inhofe	Paul	Wyden
Inouye	Portman	
Isakson	Pryor	

NAYS—22

Akaka	Franken	Merkley
Baucus	Gillibrand	Mikulski
Blumenthal	Harkin	Reed
Boxer	Landrieu	Sanders
Brown (OH)	Lautenberg	Webb
Cardin	Leahy	Whitehouse
Conrad	Levin	
Feinstein	Menendez	

NOT VOTING—2

Crapo	Kirk

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 76, the nays are 22. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Cloture having been invoked, the motion to commit falls as being inconsistent with cloture.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I raise a germaneness point of order against the pending Cantwell-Graham amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The point of order is well taken, and the amendment falls.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I raise a germaneness point of order against the Reed-Landrieu-Levin-Brown of Ohio substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The point of order is well taken and the amendment falls.

AMENDMENT NO. 1884

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 1884, offered by Senators MERKLEY, BENNET, and others.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, proposes an amendment numbered 1884.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of Monday, March 19, 2012, under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1931 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1884

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I call up the second-degree amendment, No. 1931, offered by Senator REED of Rhode Island.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for Mr. REED, proposes an amendment numbered 1931 to amendment No. 1884.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following. ''The Commission shall revise the definition of the term 'held of record' pursuant to section 12(g)(5) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15. U.S.C. 781(g)(5)) to include beneficial owners of such class of securities.''.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the bill before this body had broad bipartisan support, bicameral in nature. The bill we are considering today is the IPO bill, of course. The bill passed the House by an overwhelming majority. President Obama supports it.

I want everybody to know that the bill is imperfect, and that perhaps is an understatement. What we are trying to do with amendments offered by Senators MERKLEY and REED is to improve this bill, which has a lot of problems. These two amendments would go a long way toward correcting those.

This is an important piece of legislation, and we are confident that it will improve innovators' access to capital and give startups the flexibility they need to hire and grow. But it is not perfect, I repeat. As with any other piece of legislation, there are ways we can improve it. On this bill, there are many ways we can improve it. I am sorry we cannot do more.

To that end, the Senate will consider two germane amendments to this IPO bill that will protect investors and prevent fraud.

The first amendment is sponsored by Senator MERKLEY and others. It deals with companies that raise capital online from small investors. This amendment will ensure that watchdogs are in place to protect the small investors and their money from fraudulent companies and abuse of the system.

People are lurking out there waiting for ways to cheat. I am sorry, but it is true. These are people who are either amoral or immoral, looking for opportunities to make money. I appreciate very much the work that a number of Senators have put into this amendment. It is an important amendment, and it is so important to improving this bill. You will hear much more this afternoon from the sponsors of the amendment about why it is so important.

The second amendment is sponsored by Senator REED of Rhode Island. All Senators have stature, but JACK REED, with his military background, his experience in the House, and his experience in the Senate, is a man we all look to for leadership. His amendment will ensure fair and honest disclosure by companies raising capital. It will stop businesses from gaming the system and avoiding oversight by hiding thousands—or maybe tens of thousands—of investors. This will stop when this amendment passes.

Democrats and Republicans agree that we need to pass the IPO bill and make it easier for American companies to raise capital, to grow operations, and to hire new workers, but we must do so in a way that balances the needs and rights of investors and prevents fraud and abuse.

These two amendments will accomplish that. These two amendments are not going to make the bill perfect, but it will be a lot better.

While the IPO measure before the Senate today is an important piece of legislation, experts agree its impact on job creation will be somewhat limited.

This legislation is something that is before this body. Yesterday, Senate Republicans blocked a bill that would create, in 1 year, as it did this year that we are in, 300,000 jobs. It is hard to comprehend, but people who sponsored the amendment voted against it. But this isn't anything new. I think it is such callous disregard for what is fair and right.

The Republican leader has been talking nonstop about how important it is for Congress to continue to create jobs. So I am disappointed—and that is an understatement—that yesterday Senate Republicans, led by my friend the Republican leader, rejected an opportunity to help American exporters grow and hire.

The Ex-Im Bank helps American exporters compete in a global economy, and it has always enjoyed broad, bipartisan support—until this Republican minority stepped in here. The last time it was offered, in 2006, a Republican offered it. It got unanimous consent to pass. This legislation has been going since the 1930s. It is backed by the National Association of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, and labor unions. All my Republican friends can explain to the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the Business Roundtable that not only did they kill this bill but they stopped the deficit from going down by $1 billion, because the Ex-Im Bank bill reduces the deficit by $1 billion. Of course, it had Republican cosponsors.

In fact, my Republican colleagues, including many who voted against this amendment yesterday, admitted they support the legislation. I had a number of Senators come to me saying, we like it. As I said yesterday in my remarks, they are voting against a bill they say they like. The Republican leader said a number of things yesterday, but he said he wanted to vote down this worthy proposal because he wants to pass it separately.

We understand what is going on here. The Republican-dominated House of Representatives wants to send over here a hollow shell of the Ex-Im Bank, and they would look to us and say that we now have an Ex-Im Bank bill. What they have come up with is so foolish, and that is a good description of it. Their offer is hollow. They want to appear to support the Ex-Im Bank and at the same time kill it.

Democrats actually do support the Ex-Im Bank, and we made that very clear to everybody and voted accordingly. We want it to become law.

House Republicans have shown no desire to even consider this important jobs measure—let alone pass it. The only way to ensure the Ex-Im Bank can continue to help American companies grow and create jobs is for the Senate to attach it to this IPO bill, and that failed.

Yesterday, Senate Republicans had an opportunity to join with Democrats to create hundreds of thousands of jobs in this country over the next many years. They passed up that opportunity. Once again, they chose to pick an unnecessary fight instead. They want to fight over even things they agree with. How do you like that one? They love this bill, but they want to fight about it.

Our No. 1 priority is to create jobs, and we have shown that. It is obvious that the Republicans don't have their priorities straight. But this is something we have had to live with.

We are going to work with the minority to come up with a time to have a vote. The time expires around 6 o'clock tonight. Because of a number of things going on here today, I hope we can have a vote earlier than that. We will do our best to work with the Republican leader to try to come up with a vote. There will be three votes: Merkley, Reed, and final passage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana is recognized.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask to speak for up to 10 minutes, with Senator MERKLEY following me.

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

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise to speak in strong support of the capital formation bill that we received cloture on a few minutes ago.

In a place where we too often get bogged down by politics, this legislation reflects a strong, bipartisan commitment to creating jobs by ensuring that small businesses have access to critical capital that they need. This legislation has tremendous potential to create jobs and spur economic growth and innovation. The key component to achieving all of these goals is ensuring that small businesses have access to the capital they need to grow their businesses and create jobs.

This legislation is a rare instance in Congress where both Chambers in both parties come together to focus on this Nation's most urgent priority, and that is jobs. The President has already expressed his support for it. So let's get this bill done and off to him for his signature.

Over the past few years, I have held 12 small business opportunity workshops all over the State of Montana. Without a doubt, access to capital is always one of the most critical issues that I hear from small business owners. Access to capital makes all the difference for a small business. If the money is there, so is the expansion; so is the capacity to do more research and development; so is the next great idea. Without capital, though, there is no growth, no risk-taking, and there are no jobs.

Montana is a State of entrepreneurs. It is a frontier State. It has a tradition of self-reliance, which is clearly reflected in the entrepreneurs and the successful and innovative small businesses they have created and grown in this great State. They clearly reflect America's entrepreneurial spirit, which helps keep rural America strong and makes our economy the most innovative in the world.

Our small businesses in Montana vary from family farms, ranches, and one-man manufacturing shops, to innovative biotech companies and cutting-edge information analytics firms. Many of these newer firms have the opportunity to change the landscape when it comes to diversifying Montana's economy.

According to research from the Kauffman Foundation, nearly all net jobs created since 1980 have come from firms 5 years or younger. The role of startups in creating jobs and driving innovation has been well documented, but that ability to create jobs is limited if these firms do not have access to financing to scale and to grow their companies. So central to job creation is making sure investors and capital markets are accessible for startups.

Because of this potential for growth, we need to do all we can to empower these businesses with the tools they need to survive and thrive at every stage of their development. These young companies must be able to access the capital they need to bring innovative ideas and products to the marketplace.

Back in July I held the first of a series of hearings in the Banking Committee to examine the challenges and opportunities facing innovative small businesses as they try to access capital. A major take-away from the hearing was the need to ensure that capital markets remain within reach of startups at various stages of their development, particularly in the stages before they may be ready to go public.

A key recommendation offered at the hearing came from Rob Bargatze of Ligocyte Pharmaceuticals in Bozeman, MT. He said we should take a closer look at updating SEC regulation A to better enable small businesses to raise capital through these public offerings. The regulation A exemption was created in the Securities Act of 1933 to provide small companies with an opportunity to raise capital without being subject to full registration with the SEC.

Ligocyte is developing a new norovirus vaccine with the potential to prevent hospitalization and save significant health care costs—and to create those jobs of the future. Working through the FDA approval process is not easy. It requires years of hard work and tens of millions of dollars. It can be tough for any company to stick it out for that long or for that much money, but for a small firm in Bozeman, MT, it can be especially difficult. Access to capital to fund their clinical trials will be the determining factor in their ability to gain FDA approval.

Back in September, Senator TOOMEY and I introduced the Small Company Capital Formation Act to update regulation A by increasing the total amount of capital that can be raised through these offerings to $50 million, while protecting new investors. Currently, the businesses can only raise $5 million under regulation A—a limit that has not been updated in nearly 20 years and one that many view as too low to be a valuable tool in raising capital.

The bill maintains the most attractive elements of regulation A, including the ability for issuers to test the waters before registering with the SEC. It also preserves the nonrestricted status of securities sold through a reg A offering so that these securities can be resold to investors after the initial offering.

New investor protections include a requirement that issuers file an audited financial statement with the SEC—a requirement that has been included in the legislation that I introduced as well as the House bill before us today. The bill also directs the SEC to establish additional disclosure requirements and requires issuers to electronically file offering statements with the Commission.

Additionally, the bill subjects those offering or selling securities under regulation A to negligence-based liability under section 12(a)(2), and it includes disqualification provisions to prevent bad actors from making these offerings in a way that is consistent with Dodd-Frank.

From what I have heard said about the House version of regulation A, you would presume none of these investor protections are included. Let me clarify that the bill I introduced with Senator TOOMEY, S. 1544, is identical to the language included in the House bill, H.R. 3606, that is before us today.

The truth is that the substitute amendment that was voted on yesterday made very minor changes to this portion of the House bill, such as changing a ''may'' to a ''shall'' and adding a study by the SEC 5 years after implementation of these changes.

We should have been able to pass this bill by a voice vote here in the Senate since this bill has enjoyed strong bipartisan support in the Senate, with six bipartisan cosponsors. Regardless of that, I am pleased that this balanced bill also enjoyed a 420-to-1 vote in the House—420 for, 1 against. Imagine that—all but one voting Member of the House of Representatives agree on this bill.

I would also note the SEC's recently released recommendation from its Forum on Small Business Capital Formation increasing the regulation A exemption to $50 million was one of the top recommendations at this forum.

By the way, this is an idea which has been in the SEC's Forum on Small Business Capital Formation recommendations almost every year since 1993, the year after the limit was last raised to $5 million. So the idea that this is some risky new idea is not correct. In fact, at a briefing with the SEC a few weeks ago, SEC lawyers suggested that there was absolutely nothing scary about S. 1544 and that they felt very comfortable with the existing investor protections included in that bill.

The bottom line is that I am thrilled we will finally have an opportunity to pass this legislation—hopefully very soon—and get it to the President's desk.

What does this legislation mean for Montana entrepreneurs? Let me cite a few examples.

For Brett Baker, president and CEO of Microbion Corporation in Bozeman, lifting the cap on regulation A offerings will provide him with broader opportunities to raise capital. Instead of worrying about where the next phase of financing will come from, he can focus on discovery and research, working with the Department of Defense to use compounds Microbion discovered to treat antibiotic-resistant wounds. These changes will also allow a company such as Microbion to access capital at an earlier stage without diluting its earlier investors who believed in them from the earliest days of that company. And raising capital publicly through regulation A would also give folks in Bozeman who know about the company an opportunity to share in its success, something that is not possible now unless they are an accredited investor.

More broadly, this legislation is going to provide small businesses in Montana's emerging data and biotech industries with new tools and options to access capital at different stages of development, and it will also provide necessary updates to existing regulations. For example, changes to the SEC's 500 shareholder rule would ensure companies, such as investment brokerage D.A. Davidson in Great Falls, can continue to provide their employees with stock in the company without having to go through a costly and time-consuming registration process with the SEC. This Montana-grown company dates back over 75 years and has always believed in rewarding its employees so they can have a stake in the success of the firm, which now operates in 16 States. Without these changes, a company such as D.A. Davidson would be faced with the choice of costly public registration or potentially eliminating existing employee shareholders.

For companies such as Rivertop Renewables in Missoula, this legislation will provide them with an onramp to going public if that is an option they choose to take one day. Rivertop has begun full-scale production of their groundbreaking green biochemical products used in commercial products such as dishwashing detergents and deicer. These changes will ensure that Rivertop will have multiple strategies at their disposal so they can go public at a time that is right for them and take advantage of the public markets as they continue commercialization of their products.

For Lance Trebesch of ticketprinting.com and Ticket River, this legislation will enable him to grow his ticket printing, event management, and online ticket printing firm. Since 1997 this company has expanded its reach internationally, with over 25 employees in Bozeman and Harlowton, MT.

This bill will ensure that entrepreneurs across the State of Montana will have a whole new set of tools at their disposal so they can make smart decisions about their future to develop and expand their businesses. They will have more choices and better access to capital markets, which should also give them more leeway to create and innovate.

We have seen ecosystems of support for small businesses such as these as they spring up in virtually every county in Montana. Obviously, the success of these companies has implications for job creation and growth, but there are also tremendous opportunities for innovation.

It is not surprising that in Montana so many startups have located near universities in Missoula and Bozeman. In fact, many of these firms got their start with discoveries in the labs at Montana State and the University of Montana. With this legislation, the possibilities are endless for Montana and for entrepreneurs and innovators across Montana and this Nation.

Mr. President, I look forward to voting on this legislation and getting it to the President for his signature.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of the remarks of Senator MERKLEY and Senator BENNET, I be recognized.

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

Mr. REED. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

AMENDMENT NO. 1884

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak to amendment No. 1884. Specifically, this is the crowdfunding amendment. That might be a term that is new to many, so let me explain.

The Internet provides new opportunities for capital to reach small businesses and startup entrepreneurs, and what this crowdfunding amendment does is to say that when the crowd; that is, all of those who are surfing the Internet, goes to a funding portal on the Internet, a Web site, to support a company, to invest in a company, there is an orderly process that adequately facilitates this type of opportunity while providing fundamental investor protections. So this will be an effective instrument of capital formation because, indeed, if crowdfunding becomes a situation where inaccurate information is put forward, where there is no

accountability, where there are pump-and-dump schemes, then the reputation of crowdfunding will be deeply damaged and the opportunity for capital formation will be equally affected.

This follows on a model that is already on the Internet in some other contexts. For example, you can visit a Web site called kickstarter.com, and you as an individual can look at a host of concepts that are being put forward for social and artistic activities across this country. You can say: Yes, I want to help that artist build that sculpture or so on and so forth. They may say how much money they want to raise, and you would decide what you want to donate. That is a donation model. You also can go to Web sites such as prosper.com or kiva.com, and these are peer-to-peer lending Web sites. If you go to prosper.com, you will see a whole list of folks who are saying: Yes, I want to consolidate my credit cards, I would like to borrow X amount and I am offering an interest rate of such-and-such, and here is a little bit of background, and you can decide if you want to lend to that individual or not. That is peer-to-peer lending.

Well, what crowdfunding does is to create an equal opportunity for folks to invest in early-stage businesses, startup businesses, small businesses. Imagine, for example, you run into someone at a cafe who says: I have this new idea for a coffee shop called Starbucks. I am going to call it Starbucks. Would you like to help me launch this?

And you say: Well, another coffee shop—I don't know if the world needs another coffee shop.

Maybe you jump in and maybe you don't. Then years later, you say: Oh, I should have seized that opportunity.

Well, through a crowdfunding portal, you get to hear those stories. You get to read those stories being presented by folks from across the country about their efforts, and you can decide if you want to participate.

Now, crowdfunding is in the larger capital formation bill that comes to us from the House, but that particular formulation is deeply flawed, and I am going to walk through a series of differences between the House bill and the Senate bill for my colleagues so they can understand why we need to pass amendment 1884.

The first factor is that the House bill does not require someone listing themselves or asking for startup money to provide any financial information. Well, that is a huge mistake. If there is no information, there is nothing to guide, if you will, the wisdom of the crowd.

What we do in this Senate amendment is to create a simplified format. If you are seeking less than $100,000, then your CEO simply certifies what the financials are for the company. If you are seeking from $100,000 to $500,000, then you need to have a CPA review the financial statements. If you are seeking more than $500,000, then you need to have audited financial statements. So, as the amount of money you are asking for increases, the degree to which you need to do due diligence financially and present the details increases as well.

There is certainly nothing that would prevent a particular Web site from establishing its own standards above and beyond these particular levels.

A second thing is it is critical there be accountability for the accuracy of the information. The House bill not only doesn't even require information, but they put out information and there is no accountability. Basically, it is an invitation to spin any story one likes.

What the Senate bill says is, in order for this capital market to work well one has to stand behind the accuracy of their information. It has basic liability accountability; that is, as a director or officer of this organization, they are standing behind the accuracy of what they put out. It has a due diligence protection so this is very balanced. It has a requirement that the information be relevant or germane to the conduct of the company. So that is another protection for the business itself. So it is balanced between the two. But this can give investors a basic belief that what is being set up are reasonable amounts of information proportional to the request and that the officers and directors are standing behind this information. That creates the foundation for an effective marketplace.

A third distinction between the House bill and our amendment No. 1884 is the House bill does not require companies to go through an intermediary. In other words, under the House bill, if someone wants to promote their company, they can simply put out an e-mail. An e-mail can say anything they want because they are not responsible for the accuracy, and they can send it to everyone in the world. They can proceed to put up popup ads that simply promote their company—again, with no accuracy required. But by creating an Internet intermediary and that intermediary has to register, we create a streamlined formulation so they have a funding portal registration much simpler than a broker dealer. But in doing so, they agree they are not going to take any position on the various investment opportunities they are listing. So you truly are the marketplace. They are not saying, by the way, that particular offering by that company is a sweet deal. They can't pump it; they can't favor it. So you are a neutral marketplace, again, enabling the investor to know they are getting straightforward information, not something that is spun.

Another distinction is the House bill has no aggregate caps. The result of that is that a person could lose their entire life savings in one fell swoop. The Senate bill puts on very reasonable proportional caps that say if one's income is $40,000 or less, their cap is $2,000; if they are between $40,000 and $100,000, their cap is 5 percent of their annual income; if they are over $100,000, it is 10 percent. So it allows for larger amounts of money from those who have much higher incomes but provides basic aggregate cap protections so we don't end up with folks who are on public services because they were swindled out of everything they had.

Another key distinction is that under the House bill one can list their offering and close their offering within a single day, which provides absolutely no feedback loop for any type of detected deception. Under the Senate bill, we create a 3-week period from one's listing to their closing. So one lists their idea. If enough people sign up to reach one's funding request level—say one has requested to raise $600,000. If enough people sign up and they are investing $100,000 here, $1,000 there that one reaches their goal, as soon as the 21-day period expires, then they close. So that does give time for some sort of feedback loops regarding any sort of fraudulent activity.

Another distinction is that the House bill allows a company to pay promoters and not disclose it. That is called pumping. If one has ever seen the movie ''Boiler Room,'' one can see a basic classic pump-and-dump scheme, where a roomful of folks on the phone are calling people, cold-calling them, and they are saying: Hey, I am calling because I am giving you this incredible investment opportunity and here is the story. They can say anything they want and they can talk people into buying that stock and then the stock is actually being purchased from the folks who own the boiler room. Then, as soon as they sell all the stock they have, they quit making phone calls, the value of the stock drops, and everybody who invested loses out. That is a classic boiler room. That is a classic pump and dump. The House bill allows paid promotion with no disclosure.

The Senate bill says if they are going to get on the blog's site within a Web site portal and say favorable things about a stock and if they are paid by the company to do it, they have to disclose that. They simply say: Hey, I am employed by such and such, but I want to bring to your attention some merits of this. But at least the public knows where they are coming from.

Another essential issue is the issue of dilution. Dilution is not a solution in this world; it is a problem. Those are folks who get in on the front end and think: I got in on this idea early. I am going to benefit from having made this effort, and find out later a bigger investor came in and the stock was diluted in a fashion in which they are basically written out of their share of the ownership. So the Senate bill directs the SEC to provide investor protections in this area.

These are key distinctions. These are the distinctions between a solid foundation for capital formation in this incredibly exciting new opportunity, new

market, and simply a path to predatory schemes that the House is providing. That is why I am encouraging my colleagues to support the amendment Senator BENNET, who will be speaking next, and I have put together and a number of our colleagues have joined us, including Senator LANDRIEU and Senator SCOTT BROWN. This is a credible foundation for an exciting idea.

Let me close with this notion; that is, that across America, Americans have $17 trillion invested in their retirement accounts. If they were to put 1 percent of those funds into this type of crowdfunding startup, they would be providing $170 billion of investment potential for small companies and startup companies. That is an incredibly powerful potential form of capital to put America forward. It is small businesses that create most of the jobs, and this capital formation idea will help in that. Let's get it done.

I certainly deeply appreciate the contributions of my colleague from Colorado, Senator BENNET, who will make his points.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the Senator from Oregon, Mr. MERKLEY, for his leadership on this issue and for his willingness, when times got tough, to dig even deeper and make sure we get to the balanced approach that is reflected in this amendment. It is a bipartisan amendment, which around this place I think is worthy of all of us taking a moment to recognize, and it is an amendment the people who know most about crowdfunding support. I wish to read several paragraphs from some of those folks.

From Launcht, which is a crowdfunding platform, they note that our compromise:

> [i]s important because, unlike previous bills, for the first time, we have a Senate bill with bipartisan sponsorship, a balance of state oversight and federal uniformity, industry standard investor protections, and workable funding caps.

From the National Small Business Association, we hear that our compromise:

> [w]ould promote entrepreneurship, job creation and economic growth by making it much easier for small companies to raise capital and get new ideas off the ground. This legislation represents a reasonable effort to accommodate differing points of view and to move this important idea forward.

One prominent investor protection advocate wrote that:

> [t]he CROWDFUND Act addresses this concern by providing significant regulatory relief to very small issuers without unreasonably compromising the investor protection provisions on which the federal securities laws are grounded and the long-term success of the U.S. securities markets has been based.

The Senator from Oregon did an excellent job of describing the provisions in this bill, so I am not going to go over that ground again. But I do wish to talk for a moment before I yield to the Senator from Rhode Island about what it is we are trying to solve. Too often I think we don't ask ourselves what the nature of the problem is we are trying to solve before we actually set about solving it, and then—no surprise—we end up actually making matters worse.

In my townhalls the chief concern of the people who come is that median family income has continued to decline in this country. For the first time in this country's history, the middle class is earning less at the end of the decade than they were at the beginning of the decade. That has never happened before in the United States.

So person after person has come and said: MICHAEL, I have done what I was supposed to do. I kept working at my job. Nobody said I didn't do a good job. But my wage is actually less in real dollars today than it was at the beginning of the decade, but the cost of health insurance continues to go up, the cost of college. I have had at least half a dozen people say to me they cannot afford to send their kid to the best college they got into. I can't think of anything that is more of a waste of our productivity than that.

The essential problem we are facing in this economy is structural. Our gross domestic product, believe it or not, as we stand here, is higher than it was when we went into this recession, the worst recession since the Great Depression. Productivity is also way up. The efficiency with which we are driving that economic growth is way up because we have had to respond to competition from abroad. We can't take anything for granted anymore. We have employed technology to drive productivity from the cotton pickers in my wife's hometown to the largest Fortune 500 companies that we have, and we have 23 or 24 million people who are either unemployed or underemployed in this economy.

The economic output is back, but it has decoupled from wages and it has decoupled from job growth and that was true before we went into the worst recession. You see, the last period of economic growth in this country's history is the first time our economy grew and wages fell, that our economy grew and that we lost jobs. It was a decoupling of economic growth from wage growth and from job growth. There is something terribly wrong with that picture, and it is creating an enormous downward pressure on the middle class in this country.

There are a bunch of things we need to do, but there are two major things that I think we need to do; one is, we need to educate our people for the 21st century. The worst the unemployment rate ever got for people with a college degree in the worst recession since the Great Depression, the one we just went through, was 4.5 percent. That is a pretty good stress test, it seems to me, of the value of a college education in the 21st century. But as a country today, if someone is a child living in poverty, their chances of getting a college degree are 9 in 100. If we don't change the way we educate people in this country, we will continue to see 91 of 100 children living in poverty constrained to the margin of our economy and the margin of this democracy. That is an important piece of work. We have a vital national interest in that, and we are not paying attention to it here.

But also we have to create the conditions in this country where we are driving innovation and driving job growth because the days of just expecting the largest companies in this country to create jobs are over. The jobs that went away in the 20th century, many of them are not coming back in the 21st century. It is about businesses that are started tomorrow and next week and the week after that and the month after that. In order to create those sorts of conditions, the amendment we have presented, this crowdfunding amendment, could unleash billions of dollars, as the Senator from Oregon said, of local investment, investment on Main Street—or on someone else's Main Street through the Internet—that could allow people with great innovative ideas for the first time to raise capital from our middle class and from other people who would like to participate in this kind of new business venture.

This is not all we need to do. There are many things we need to do, and I think there are things in this overall bill we need to fix. But this bipartisan amendment represents a real step forward. As we look to the future, it is the reason we need to do comprehensive tax reform in this Congress. It is the reason we need to fundamentally think differently in this Congress about our regulations. We should be asking ourselves the question: Are we more or less likely to be creating jobs in the United States with rising wages? I think we should put the politics of this aside because there isn't a person in this Chamber who doesn't want to do this. We start, though, with the recognition that we have structural issues we need to resolve.

I hope everybody who hasn't had the chance to get a look at the amendment will look at it. I hope people on both sides of the aisle will support this amendment. I am very pleased it is bipartisan, with Senator MERKLEY and Senator BROWN, and I look forward to voting on this amendment this afternoon.

I see the Senator from Rhode Island is here. I thank him for his leadership on this legislation, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I commend Senator MERKLEY and Senator BENNET for their extraordinary work, indeed, in collaboration I believe with our colleague Senator BROWN from Massachusetts to make significant improvements in the crowdfunding provisions

of the House bill. As Senator BENNET and Senator MERKLEY have indicated, this represents a potentially very productive way to raise capital, and they have provided protections that will ensure investors in this process are not disadvantaged, and I commend them for that.

It addresses one of the significant issues in the House bill but, frankly, not all the significant issues. There are some extremely glaring, I think, provisions in the House bill that we attempted to address in the Reed-Landrieu-Levin substitute. That substitute amendment, although it received a majority of votes, did not receive enough to achieve cloture to be the bill we are now considering. We are now considering the House bill.

I have an amendment to that House bill that addresses one of several difficulties with the House legislation. Investors, when they buy stock in public companies, expect routine disclosures. They expect to know on a quarterly basis, and in a very real sense on an annual basis, what is the company doing? What are the prospects of the company? All that goes hand in hand with the widely dispersed ownership of a public company. The House legislation would allow many companies with a substantial number of beneficial shareholders, the actual owners, the real owners of the stock, the ones who can vote the stock, the ones who get the dividends, the ones who vote on the proxies or directly for the leadership of the corporation—it would allow them to remain dark. This might be appropriate for some companies that have a relatively small base of real owners, but the way the House has drafted this legislation it could risk allowing a significant number of larger companies to go or remain dark.

The Securities Exchange Act of 1934 set up a system of public reporting. Beginning in 1964, the SEC required that companies with at least 500 holders of record—and at least $10 million in assets, to follow the routine reporting requirements under the securities laws. The decision was made that at that point a company does have a size that is adequate and necessary so that they should be disclosing.

The issue that is motivating the House is this 500-person requirement. It was adopted, as I said, in 1964. There is a sense that the limit is probably too low. The House version is 2,000. We make no attempt to change the House limit of 2,000 now, the new limit. But what we want to be sure of is that the individuals who are being counted are not the record holders, they are the real owners, the beneficial owners. In fact, many companies are very astute and assiduous in assuring that these record holders fall beneath this 500 level.

There are many large companies, well-known companies, as I mentioned in my previously remarks, that have thousands of beneficial owners but still have, on their own records, less than 500 holders of record. The SEC defines record holders as ''each person who is identified as the owner of such securities on records of the security holders maintained by or on behalf of the issuer.''

Holder of record is very direct. It is the shareholders who are recorded as such on the books of the company. This is where the term ''beneficial owner'' comes from. In such instances, the shares are held of record by a third party, usually a broker, on behalf of the shareholder. For example—and this is one of many examples—if you buy shares from Charles Schwab, that discount brokerage firm would likely serve as the record holder and you would be the beneficial owner. It is your money; you paid for it. It is your vote because you are a beneficial owner. It is your right to sell the shares. But as far as the company is concerned, the holder of record is the broker, Charles Schwab.

I think we have all been familiar and all received in the mail a big package of proxy materials from our broker. It is not, in many cases, directly from the company. It is from the Wells Fargo Advisors, it is from Schwab Advisors, et cetera, because they are on the records of the company as the ones who are the record holders. They distribute the material to beneficial owners.

The consequence is that for companies that may have a very few or relatively few record holders, they have thousands and thousands of beneficial owners. Those are the individuals who will lose out if the company decides, under the House bill, to suddenly go or remain dark, to avoid public reporting.

As I have indicated before, most investors today do so through intermediaries—through brokers, through others. As a result, they would not necessarily be counted as a record holder. Record holders—the brokers, the large entities—are increasingly purely passthroughs. They are agents with no economic interest in the company, no voting rights. Those are held by the beneficial owners. That is why I believe that beneficial ownership should be the test for whether companies have to report under the Securities Exchange Act. It should encompass those who have the power to sell and/or the power to vote the shares. They are the actual shareholders. They are the individuals who management is committed by fiduciary duties to work for. So I think it is appropriate that when we raise this level to 2,000 we also ensure that it is not simply record holders, it is the beneficial owners—the real owners, for want of another term.

There also could be, for example, two identical companies with identical numbers of beneficial owners but they might have different numbers of record holders because of the way the shares are held—in trust or by a broker, et cetera. And one company reporting and one not reporting does not seem to be to be a fair or efficient way to do business.

Companies already have to obtain numbers of beneficial owners from brokers and banks in order to know how many copies of annual reports and proxy materials they have to print, so every company knows about how many beneficial numbers they have. They have to provide the proxy material through the brokerage or bank to the beneficial owners, so they know very well—in fact, quite precisely—their beneficial ownership, their real shareholders.

But using record level as the trigger to remain private, to avoid public reporting, to me again is the wrong approach. My amendment would clarify the definition in this new shareholder threshold section of the underlying bill, and ensure that companies are not avoiding these public reporting requirements by using a threshold of 2,000 record holders if they have 2,000 or fewer beneficial owners. If this is a truly small business that has 1,500 individual shareholders, beneficial owners, and they want to remain dark—that seems to be something that we certainly would countenance, and with my language it would be possible to do so.

I think this approach makes it fair for everyone. It also doesn't frustrate the expectations of a person who buys a share of nationally known stock that is publicly reported and gets a 10–Q and every year the 10–K, and suddenly they don't get anything. They wonder what is going on at the company. Maybe the company merges with another company, creates a new company, and now has less than 2000 holders of record. I think that is not an approach we should countenance. I think transparency and accurate information are critical to the success of our capital markets, and I think this legislation will do that. Requiring quarterly reporting of firms with a large number of shareholders—real shareholders, beneficial shareholders—protects investors while at the same time improving overall market transparency and efficiency. From this information, those individual analysts and brokers who follow companies are able to determine their recommendations, are able to advise clients that you should buy this company, it is a good company.

When the company goes dark, that information source dries up and it is harder for individuals, brokers, investment advisors to give advice. I think this would not be helpful to the market. In fact, I think it might, ironically, impede capital formation, not facilitate capital formation.

There is one important point that has to be stressed, and that is my amendment does not affect the employee exemption in the underlying bill. The House bill has a blanket exemption for counting owners of the company for employees. We have reviewed this exemption in our legislation with eminent experts, including Prof. John Coates at Harvard Law School, and he concurs that employees would not be swept up into being

counted because they happen to receive compensation through stock in their company.

There are many companies—WaWa, Wegmans—that want to have active employee participation in the company through stock plans but are private companies and want to remain private. This should allow them to do so.

Again, my legislation makes no attempt to change the underlying House bill, which gives a very broad blanket exemption for employees, who are exempted from the shareholder threshold.

There is another aspect here, too, and that is ESOPs, employee stock option plans, because they do acquire stock on behalf of employees. We specifically asked Professor Coates, one of the preeminent experts in securities law, whether this would inadvertently trigger or inadvertently complicate the beneficial ownership rule. His opinion is that ESOPs typically count as one record holder and one beneficial owner because they do not pass through the votes or the right to direct sales. They do not have the characteristics which are typical of the beneficial owner: the right to vote and the right to sell the stock. They maintain those rights. They do not delegate those to the individual employees who might be part of the pool. So Professor Coates' view is that ESOPs also would be exempt from being counted, if you will, as more than one entity.

We have also reached out to the Securities and Exchange Commission and we have received some assurances, from talking to Meredith Cross of the SEC, that, given their rulemaking power, they have within the ambit of their power in implementing this legislation the ability to clarify any of these points. So that not just employees who receive stock through an employee plan, but an ESOP and other entities that hold stock—not on behalf of their investors but have the right as an entity such as a venture capital fund or a private equity fund—have the right at that fund level to vote and to direct the sale of the shares and receive the dividends—that they, too, would be counted as one entity.

Professor Coates, as I said, believes this will not affect the venture capital/private equity firm structures, which would typically count as one shareholder, whether of record or beneficially. The VC firm or PE firm does not pass through votes or the right to direct sales to its own investors, and the same might be said with mutual funds, pension funds, et cetera—the primary passthrough which would be counted as brokers and banks, who hold on behalf of beneficial owners.

What we have, I think, is legislation that recognizes the need to increase the number adopted in 1964, but also to recognize that the real owners of companies far exceed, in many cases, the holders or record, and that these real owners depend upon the routine reporting that is required under the Securities Exchange Act so they can be informed, so they can follow their stock. Indeed, the analysts who look closely at these companies, who make recommendations to buy and sell, also need this type of information. For this reason I have proposed this amendment. I think it is something that improves the bill. It was included in our substitute which did not receive 60 votes to pass cloture but did receive the majority of votes in this body. I think it is something, again, that will improve this legislation. I would not hesitate to add that many more improvements are necessary, but certainly this would be an improvement.

I would note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of New Mexico). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. 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. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with my Republican colleagues for 30 minutes.

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, on the Senate floor this morning Senator DURBIN called on Republican Members to offer to give up what he called their Federal health care. I heard his comments, and he makes an interesting argument. But, once again, Democrats in the Senate are ignoring history, as the Senator did today. They are ignoring the facts and ignoring the Democrats' record on this issue.

The truth is, Republicans in this body have already offered to give up their health insurance coverage. In fact, here is the rest of the story:

During the debate on the health care law—almost 2 years ago today—Republicans offered to forego their private coverage and instead enroll all Members of Congress in Medicaid, the government's safety-net program for low-income individuals. The Democrats in this body unanimously rejected this idea. Every Democrat voted no. This was on an amendment by former Senator LeMieux from Florida, an amendment that asked to enroll all Members of Congress in the Medicaid Program. Yet at least 50 percent of the newly covered individuals under the Democrats' new law are going to get coverage, and they will get their coverage through Medicaid.

So the President's solution for health care in this country is to put 50 percent of the newly covered individuals under Medicaid. Yet the Democratic Members of the Senate unanimously voted no. If Democrats believe Medicaid is good enough for the 24 million people they will soon force onto the rolls, my question is, Why isn't it good enough for the Democratic Members of Congress?

So I am joined today by my colleagues on the Senate floor who continue to raise questions about the health care law and so many broken promises made by this President. I am fortunate to be joined by a senior member of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator GRASSLEY.

I would ask my colleague from Iowa, as a senior member of the Senate Finance Committee, who spent a lot of time studying and debating President Obama's health care law, my question to the Senator is, Do you think the President's promises match the reality?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I say to the Senator from Wyoming, definitely not, and Americans are seeing every day that is not the case. If I could respond a little bit more in length, I would go back to 1994 and point out a problem President Clinton had, and in turn that President Obama tried to avoid about 14 years later. It was in 1994 that the health care reform issue came before the Congress—promoted by President Clinton at that time—and it failed in large part because it fundamentally changed the health care coverage for nearly every American.

We know the bill that is now law has fundamentally changed, but President Obama, in 2009—and throughout his campaign in 2008—decided he would combat the failure of the Clinton administration on health care reform, and not being successful there, by repeating over and over to Americans: ''If you like what you have, you can keep it.'' That is basically what we heard at least 47 different times while the bill on health care reform was being debated.

We heard that from the President himself. We probably heard it from Members of this Congress hundreds of times. While it may have been politically useful to make that promise to the American people, it remains a promise he cannot keep and he did not keep.

The fact is, millions of Americans are seeing changes in their existing health plans due to the health reform law. So, basically, when the President said, ''if you like what you have, you can keep it,'' it is not turning out that way, and Americans are seeing it every day.

The administration's regulations governing so-called ''grandfathered health plans'' will force most firms—up to 80 percent of the small businesses—to give up their current health care programs, and that is happening fairly regularly. When those businesses lose their grandfathered status, they immediately become subject to costly new mandates and increased premiums that follow. So the economics of health care costs and health care insurance dictate that people are not going to be able to keep what they have, as the President promised.

Families in 17 States no longer have access to child-only plans as a result of

the health care law. So if you were a voter in 2008, and the President said to you ''if you like what you have, you can keep it,'' and you wanted only health insurance for your children, you cannot do that today in these 17 States. It is not known how many families who lost coverage for their children because of the law have been able to find an affordable replacement.

Medicare Advantage covers about 20 percent of the senior citizens of America. There is a study that shows the Medicare Advantage enrollment is going to be cut in half. The choices available to seniors are going to be reduced by two-thirds. Then there is the open question about Americans who receive their health care through large employers. The CBO recently released a report that constructed a scenario where as many as 20 million Americans could lose their employer coverage.

While I acknowledge that the Congressional Budget Office report provided the number that I just mentioned as only one possible scenario, there are many who believe that is very plausible given the incentives in the health care law created for large businesses.

So I say to the Senator from Wyoming, 47 times—just while we were debating it; I don't know how many times during the campaign—this President said, ''If you like what you have, you can keep it.'' It is a promise that was not kept.

Mr. BARRASSO. Well, I say to my colleague from Iowa, it is interesting that we take a look at this and so many promises that reflect one specific promise, ''if you like what you have, you can keep it.''

I practiced orthopedic surgery for 25 years, taking care of families in Wyoming. Many of those families included family members who were on Medicare, the program for our seniors. Senator GRASSLEY has made some reference in his earlier comments about seniors, people who are on Medicare, people who are having a harder time finding a doctor. This health care law clearly had an impact on seniors as well.

So I would ask my colleague from Iowa, are there specific things the Senator has been hearing as he travels around the State and visits with folks at home in terms of perhaps promises made specifically to seniors and those broken promises related to Medicare?

Mr. GRASSLEY. That is not only a promise that has been broken, that is a promise that is very easy to quantify because, on July 29, 2009, during the consideration of this health care reform law, the President said:

> Medicare is a government program. But don't worry: I'm not going to touch it.

So let's take a look at the health care law and see if that promise was kept. The health care law made significant cuts in Medicare programs. This is what we can quantify in dollars and cents.

On April 22, 2010, the Chief Actuary of Medicare analyzed the law and found that it would cut Medicare by $575 billion over 10 years. The President said, about Medicare, as I told you, ''I'm not going to touch it.'' But the President has touched it in a big way: $575 billion out of Medicare.

Medicare is on a path to go broke by 2021; $575 billion is not going to guarantee Medicare for everybody in the future. We have to reform and change Medicare if that promise is going to be kept. We all want to do that, but the President has made that more difficult.

The Congressional Budget Office wrote that over $500 billion in Medicare reductions ''would not enhance the ability of the government to pay for future Medicare benefits.'' You know what the President said during the debate on this bill: ''I'm not going to touch it.'' But he has touched it in a big way.

The Chief Actuary had this to say about the Medicare reductions:

> Providers—
>
> Meaning hospitals and doctors—
>
> Providers for whom Medicare constitutes a substantive portion of their business could find it difficult to remain profitable and, absent legislative intervention, might end their participation in the program.

So not only touching 500-and-some billion dollars, but also touching it in a way of limiting access for senior citizens of America when the President said, ''I'm not going to touch it,'' he misled the American people.

The CM Actuary said, in essence, these cuts could drive providers from the Medicare Program. I have a hard time understanding how these massive cuts to Medicare count as somehow: I'm not going to touch Medicare.

On the other hand, the biggest problem facing Medicare in the near term is a physicians payment update problem that we constantly have to address and could have been addressed in the health care reform bill. You know what. It was not addressed. Of course nothing was done about it. Perhaps that is what the President meant when he said about Medicare, I say to the Senator from Wyoming, ''I'm not going to touch it.''

Mr. BARRASSO. That clearly points out to the people around the country what they know, and if they are on Medicare that it is that much more challenging for them to even find a doctor because of the $500 billion of cuts to Medicare—and not to save Medicare, not to strengthen Medicare, but to start a whole new government program for other people. So those are several of the promises the President made.

We just heard from my colleague from Iowa, ''if you like what you have, you can keep it.'' We know that promise has been broken, and now the promises by the President—I will protect Medicare—which is clearly not the case, as the American people have seen, which is why this health care law is even more unpopular today than it was when it was passed.

But thinking back to the time it was passed, the Senator from Missouri Mr. BLUNT, who is joining us on the floor, was very actively involved in the debate and the discussions in pointing out the concerns people in his home State had with regard to the health care law and the objections he heard. My recollection is that there was even an issue on the ballot about the health care law and mandates and related issues.

So I ask my friend and colleague from Missouri if there are comments he would like to add to help with this discussion of the broken promises of the Obama health care law.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I thank the doctor for his leadership on this issue during the debate on the health care law itself and right up to now, the second anniversary of it being signed into law. Certainly Missouri voters were the first voters who went to the polling place and registered their views on this. As I recall, 72 percent said they did not want to be a part of it. The famous comment made on the other side of the building by the Speaker—we will know what is in the bill once we pass it—has proven to be very true and not very positive from the point of view of that bill.

The Senator from Wyoming and Senator GRASSLEY have talked about the promises made already—the promise not to touch Medicare, the promise that if you like what you have, you can keep it—surely nobody can say that with a straight face anymore—and the promise during the campaign that there wouldn't be a mandate.

Four years ago this was the big division of the two principal candidates for the nomination on that side. Senator Obama's view was that there would be no mandate, that there was no need for a mandate. In fact, at one point he said that having a mandate would be like solving homelessness by mandating that everybody buy a house. Now, that is not my quote, that is President Obama's quote when he was Senator Obama—having a mandate on health care would be like solving the housing problem by saying we are going to require that everybody buy a house.

This plan does not work. It doesn't come together. The parts of the plan that were supposed to pay for the plan are one by one being discarded.

Remember the so-called CLASS Act, the long-term care act, which technically, I guess, would have produced some money because it collected money the first 10 years; the first 10 years, we are counting the money and we are not allowed to spend any of it for the first 10 years. So, sure, that would be a net income to the Federal Government. We are not spending and money is coming in. But even the Secretary of Health and Human Services said what many of us said at the time, which is that this plan won't work, so we are not even going to collect the money because we know there is no way this particular structure will do what it is supposed to do.

It is just one broken promise after another, it is just one set of provisions

after another, and the more the American people look at it, the more they realize this just doesn't add up. Not only does it not add up financially, it doesn't add up to better health care.

We are going to see lots of people—the Congressional Budget Office recently estimated that I think 20 million people who get insurance now at work would lose that insurance at work once this goes into effect, and that was not a calculation in the original bill. Everybody was at least calculating that anybody who has insurance now would keep what their employer would continue to pay for. Well, for 20 million of them, apparently, that is not going to be the case.

I yield to the Senator from Wyoming on that topic of just what employers are going to have to decide to do once they are faced with this new mandated policy that covers not only what they think they can afford but whatever some government official decides is the perfect policy for all Americans. Now, imagine that—the perfect policy for all Americans. One-size-fits-all almost always means that one size doesn't fit anybody. And these employers, it is now understood, are in many cases just going to take the option that they will pay the penalty that is less than they are paying now for insurance or they are going to have to require their employees to go get their insurance in a subsidized exchange. That means taxpayers will be helping buy insurance for people who today have insurance through their employers at the rate of at least 20 million, and I think that number will be a lot higher than that.

Mr. BARRASSO. Well, it does seem that way to me, to the point that now, 2 years out, Senator COBURN and I put together a report on what we are finding. It is a checkup on the Federal health law, and the title is ''Warning: Side Effects.'' That is because there are huge side effects from this health care law. The four that we have written out on the prescription pad, as we see it, on the prescription pad handed out by President Obama, No. 1 is fewer choices; No. 2, we have higher taxes; No. 3, more government; and No. 4 is less innovation. That is what the American people are seeing as the side effects of this health care law. People don't want few choices, they want more choices. People don't want higher taxes, they want lower taxes. They don't want more government, they want less government. They don't want less innovation, they want more innovation. That is what the American people asked for.

There was a reason to do health care reform—because people wanted the care they need from a doctor they want at a cost they can afford. I know that is what my colleague from Iowa sees when he goes home every weekend and talks to people in his home communities.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, if I could add one thing at this point, we don't really know how bad this law is yet. I am going to add something to what Senator BLUNT said when he quoted the Speaker of the House saying that we don't really know what is in this bill and we are going to have to pass it to find out what is in it. That is what she had to say to get a majority vote even within her own party to get it through the House of Representatives. But, in a sense, she is right. One could understand every letter of this law, but it has 1,693 delegations of authority for the Secretary to write regulations, and until they are written, we aren't really going to know what is in it. We remember the accountable care organization rules that came out. Six pages out of 2,700 in the bill dealt with accountable care organizations, but the first regulations that were written were 350 pages long. So we really won't know how bad this legislation is maybe for a few years down the road, and hopefully we never get that far down the road.

Mr. BARRASSO. My understanding of the accountable care organization component is that the very health programs the accountable care organizations were modeled after, the ones the President held up as the models across the country—one was in Utah, one was Geisinger in Pennsylvania, and I believe the Mayo Clinic may have been a third—once those 350 pages of regulations came out, the programs the President said were the models we want to follow, they all said: We can't comply with these regulations. They are too stringent. They are too confining. They will not work in our program.

So if it is not going to work in the places where the President said they are doing it well, to me that means they are not going to work anywhere in Wyoming and very likely not anywhere in Iowa or anywhere in Missouri as we try to make sure patients get the care they need from the doctor they want at a cost they can afford.

That is why I continue to look at this health care law and go home every weekend and talk to people, and I continue to hear that this bill is bad for patients, bad for providers—the nurses and the doctors who take care of the patients—and bad for taxpayers.

When we take a look at Medicare—and Senator BLUNT made a comment about Medicare and some of the changes—who is going to make these decisions? It looks to me as though, from reading through this law, it is about 15 unelected bureaucrats with this so-called Independent Payment Advisory Board who will decide what hospitals will get paid for providing various services. So in small communities, the hospital may say: Well, we can no longer offer that service. I have heard my colleagues talk about the specific loss of the ability of hospitals to even stay profitable with some of the cuts, from taking $500 billion away from Medicare, again, not to save and strengthen Medicare but to start a whole new government program for others.

Those are the things we are dealing with and why, at townhall meeting after townhall meeting, people continue to tell me they want this repealed and they want it replaced with patient-centered health care—not government-centered, not insurance company-centered, but patient-centered health care. That is what people are asking for, and they get tired of all these broken promises the President has made.

I remember the President said he was going to bring down the price of premiums by $2,500 per family per year. What family wouldn't want that? The whole purpose of the health care law initially was to get the costs of health care under control. This didn't do it.

If I go to a townhall meeting, as I did not too long ago in Wyoming, and say: How many of you under the new health care law are finding that you are paying more for health insurance, not the $2,500 less a year the President promised, but how many are paying more, every hand goes up. Then we ask the question: How many of you believe the quality and the availability of your own care is going to go down as a result of this health care law, and every hand goes up. I know that in the Show Me State of Missouri, that is not what people want. They don't want to pay more and get less. I don't know if my colleague has been hearing things similar to that at home.

Mr. BLUNT. I think that is what we are all hearing. Whether you are for this bill or not, my guess is that you are hearing that if you are asking that question.

Another of the President's promises was that an average family, if this health care plan went into effect, would pay $2,500 less, as the doctor just said, per year. In fact, since he became President, insurance premiums have risen by $2,213 a year—not a $2,500 cut but a $2,213 increase, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. The survey says that in 2008, for employer-provided insurance, the average family premium was $12,860. Last year it was $15,073. These are incredible increases for families, coupled with the bad energy policies and other policies that put families into a condition they would hope not to be in and we hope for them not to be in. So you have increased costs to families, increased costs to the system.

That is the other thing the President said. Another broken promise was that this health care bill would control costs. Recently, according to the Medicare Actuary—the person who calculates these costs—the estimate was that national health spending would go up at least $311 billion over 10 years under this plan. Now, that is not cost control; that is $311 billion, almost one-third of $1 trillion in increases.

Payment reductions to hospitals—the Senator from Wyoming mentioned this board that will make these decisions. I am not sure there will be

enough people on that board who understand rural hospitals and understand why it is critical that rural hospitals that are critical-care hospitals continue to have different arrangements with the government than others do for the government-provided health care, such as Medicare and Medicaid. And if they understand that, there may not be enough people on the board who understand the unique needs of urban hospitals that have a heavily uninsured population.

How is this 15-member board going to be better than the 500 Members who serve people in Washington now, trying to look at specifics and then be accountable? To whom is this board accountable? What decision do they make that somebody can challenge in a meaningful way, in a way that they would be really concerned about?

So it doesn't control costs as the President said it would. It doesn't reduce insurance costs as the President said it would. I think it will wind up with maybe even more people uninsured as long as the penalty paid is less than the premiums paid, particularly for young workers who are outside the system today. Under the President's plan, we eliminate the advantage they have for being young and healthy by saying: No, you can't really classify groups, whereas if a person gets life insurance, that person will certainly pay more if they are 75 than if they are 27. They are just going to pay less. It is the same way today for health insurance as well because it is clear that the likelihood of a person using that plan at 26 is different than it is at 62. So all of these things just don't add up, and people are beginning to figure that they don't add up.

I thought Senator GRASSLEY made a very good point about even when we passed the bill, we wouldn't know all of the costs of this bill until it actually goes into effect. I am very much in support of his view that we never want to let this get so far down the road where we would know how much it would really cost or all the rules and regulations we would really have because it will head health care in a direction where we might not be able to reverse course and get to a health care system that is really focused on patients and health care providers rather than government bureaucrats deciding what is the best health care for everybody. I want my doctor to decide. I want to be part of that discussion. I do not want some government bureaucrat deciding what procedure is the only procedure that is acceptable for me.

Mr. BARRASSO. It is interesting—because I know the Senator goes home, as I do, very often to talk to many of the small business owners in the State of Missouri, as I do in Wyoming, and as Senator GRASSLEY does in Iowa—one of the promises the President made is, he said 4 million small businesses may be eligible for tax credits. Well, it turns out that the key word there by the President is ''may''—may be eligible.

Even the fact that the White House has sent out postcards to all these small business—the IRS spent over $1 million of taxpayers' money to send out millions of postcards promoting the tax credit—the Treasury Department's inspector general recently testified that ''the volume of credit claims has been lower than expected''—as a matter of fact, only 7 percent of the 4 million firms the administration claimed.

Why? Well, because of the complexity and the whole way the system was set up, the President was able to talk big and deliver very small. That is why so many people are very unhappy with the claims in the health care law because they know these promises have been broken.

With regard to NANCY PELOSI's famous quote—that first you have to pass it before you get to find out what is in it—that is why I come to the floor every week with a doctor's second opinion because it does seem just about every week we do learn some new unintended consequence, something new about the health care law and another reason why Americans are unhappy with it, why it remains as unpopular, if not more unpopular, today as when it was passed, and why so many people believe the Supreme Court should find this bill unconstitutional, for the reasons that do have Americans at home in an uproar, and very unhappy that the government can come into their homes and mandate that they buy a government-approved product and pay for it or pay a fine. Nothing like this has happened before, and people are, frankly, offended.

We do not know what the Supreme Court is going to do, but I know what this body ought to do. This body ought to vote to repeal and replace this broken health care law and get a health care law in place which is what the American people wanted, which is, the care they need, from the doctor they want, at a price they can afford.

We have not seen that yet. But that is why we are here on the second anniversary of the President's health care law, to continue to point out the flaws of this legislation. Quite interestingly, when you take a look at some of the national poll numbers, for people who have talked to a health care provider—whether that be a nurse, a doctor, a physician's assistant, a physical therapist, a nurse practitioner, no matter who—they are even less supportive of it than the general public.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, this Friday the Nation observes an anniversary that most Americans would prefer to see removed from its calendar. I am talking about the second anniversary of the passage of the President's health care law. Rather than celebrate this day, it is one that citizens and taxpayers have come to rue and regret. The process by which Obamacare became law was an affront to republican principles of democratic self-government. The substance of this law is an historic threat to the liberties our Constitution was designed to secure.

A decent respect for the opinions of the American people cautioned against passing this law on a purely partisan basis. Yet in spite of the clear opposition of the American people to this massive expansion of government power, and to its historic spending and tax increases, the President and his congressional allies were determined to jam this bill through the Congress.

The architects of this strategy, if not the party loyalists who carried it out against the wishes of their constituents, sleep easy at night having done so, because they knew that this was a once-in-a-generation opportunity, the crowning achievement of the liberal bureaucratic state. A takeover of the Nation's health care sector and its top-down regulation by Washington had eluded Democrats for over 70 years.

The economic downturn of 2008 changed that. With the election of President Obama and significant majorities in the Congress, the left was not going to, in the words of the President's Chief of Staff, ''let a crisis go to waste.'' What this strategy meant in practice was that Democrats would advance a radical liberal agenda whether the American people supported it or not. That is the anniversary we are observing this week, and it is a dark spot on our Nation's history, in my opinion.

The Obamacare episode showed a fundamental disrespect for the opinions and constitutional common sense of the American people. Faced with growing unrest and real concerns about the impact of this law on families, the economy, and access to health care, the law's proponents assumed that the American people were too dumb to get it; that once Obamacare became law, the American people would come to love it, as well as the benefactors who gave it to them. That is what they thought. As Speaker PELOSI explained: We have to pass the bill so you can find out what is in it.

The great liberal conceit was on full display in the process that led to this bill becoming law. We know better than you, they said. We can plan one-sixth of the American economy, and you will eventually come to like it.

Well, as we all know, the American people had something else in mind. They reminded Congress and the President that in this country the people are sovereign. They stood up as free men and women rejecting Obamacare before it became law and refused to embrace it afterwards. And as their understanding of the law has deepened, they have remained constant in their commitment to full repeal. According to a Rasmussen poll this week, over half of Americans support the full repeal of Obamacare.

Next week, the Supreme Court will hear oral argument on the constitutionality of this misguided law. In arriving at their decision later this year, they will consider Obamacare through the prism of past precedents and the

Constitution's original historic meaning. But the Justices of the Supreme Court are not the only ones evaluating the constitutionality of this law. The American people and citizens of this Nation have their own obligation to consider whether this law comports with our Constitution and principles of limited government, and on that the verdict is already in. According to a recent Gallup poll, 72 percent of American adults, including 56 percent of self-professed Democrats, believe that the law's individual mandate is unconstitutional.

The average American who opposes this law on constitutional grounds might not be a law professor or an appellate advocate, but those citizens and taxpayers understand our Constitution was designed to guarantee liberty and that it did so, in part, by limiting the powers of the Federal Government and maintaining the sovereign powers of the States.

They know the unconstitutionality of ObamaCare runs far deeper than the onerous individual mandate. The law is, at its core, a violation of our most deeply held constitutional principles.

It undermines personal liberty and puts more power in the hands of the Federal Government. In the interest of advancing what the left views as a constitutional right to health care, they undermine actual constitutional rights to life, liberty, and property.

The law's mandate for abortion-inducing drugs undermines sacred rights of personal conscience and religious liberty.

Its expansion of Medicaid fundamentally transforms the relationship of the States to the Federal Government, undercutting the ability of those sovereign communities to make basic decisions about the welfare of their citizens by crowding out spending for police, infrastructure, and education.

The American people might not have submitted complex legal briefs in the Supreme Court litigation, but their conclusions about ObamaCare possess a unique and powerful wisdom. The people of Utah and the rest of this country understand the very DNA of ObamaCare—a commitment to more government control, the empowering of an already unaccountable administrative state, and an assault on free markets—is unconstitutional.

This was not what President Obama promised the American people. The President couched this government takeover of the Nation's health care sector as a modest reform designed to reduce costs.

When he spoke before a joint session of Congress in September of 2009 to push for his plan, the President promised it would ''slow the growth of health care costs for our families, our businesses, and our government.''

The President swung and missed on all three. According to the President's own Actuary at CMS, national health expenditures would increase by $311 billion over the law's first 10 years. This comes as no surprise to the American people. The President's health care law promised all sorts of new free care. But we all know, contrary to the repeated assertions of President Obama and his administration, nothing in life is free.

The bill will eventually come due for all this so-called ''free care,'' and it is taxpayers who will pay that bill.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, ''Rising costs for health care will push Federal spending up considerably as a percentage of GDP.''

This is not what the President and his allies promised. We were promised lower costs. What we got were higher costs, more Federal spending on health care and, with it, more taxes and more debt.

When fully implemented, ObamaCare authorizes $2.6 trillion in new Federal spending over 10 years. It will increase premiums by $2,100 for families forced by ObamaCare to purchase their own insurance. Its Medicaid expansions will impose $118 billion in new costs on the States.

It will increase spending on prescription drugs, physician and clinical services, and hospital spending. It will increase the deficit by $701 billion over its first 10 years.

How does the President propose to pay for this? Here is how: He will pay for it by selling more Treasurys to China. He will pay for it by increasing taxes and penalties by over $500 billion, and American workers will ultimately pay for it with 800,000 fewer jobs than would have otherwise existed.

This is not the story the President or the Democrats in Congress responsible for this law want the American people to hear. So they will attempt to spin their way out of it.

In a memo obtained by the press last week, the advocates of ObamaCare laid out their strategy to sell the merits of this misguided law prior to oral arguments at the Supreme Court.

This week was designed to lay out all the great things provided by ObamaCare. But, naturally, that memo mentions absolutely none of the costs. It doesn't mention the cost of these benefits for Federal taxpayers. It doesn't mention the costs for employers and workers. It doesn't mention that the law could lead to as many as 20 million Americans losing employer-sponsored health benefits by 2019. It doesn't mention the impact the $½ trillion in tax increases and penalties will have on the economy, and it doesn't mention the harm this law does to our Constitution and its principles of republicanism, personal liberty, and limited government.

I wish I could say I was surprised, but I am not. ObamaCare is merely the capstone to a generations-long liberal project that has attempted to convince citizens that they can have their cake and eat it too. They can have all the benefits of an ever-expanding welfare state, and nobody—or only the very rich—would have to pay for it. ObamaCare exploded this myth. It is the culmination of generations of government expansion, and it shows once and for all that we are all going to be paying for the liberal welfare state.

Taxing Warren Buffet is not going to cut it. All American families will pay for this $2.6 trillion spending law one way or the other. After centralizing control of the Nation's health care system in Washington, DC, and putting health care decisions into the hands of government bureaucrats, we will all pay for it through higher taxes, less opportunity, and diminished access to care.

Our children are going to have to pay for it, as a nation conceived in liberty is increasingly burdened by an unsustainable national indebtedness; that is, unless the American people get the final word on this. They certainly should.

I believe in the American people. I know what my fellow Utahans think about the President's health care law. No less than legislators or Justices, they take the Constitution seriously. They know this law is unconstitutional. They know what it does to free markets and to free men and women. They know that if this law is constitutional, then there are effectively no limits on what the Federal Government can do. They know this law has to go. I look forward to showing it the door.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 30 minutes.

Mr. BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, I enjoyed the preceding presentation by the Senators dealing with issues surrounding health care. I think it is a very relevant discussion we need to all pay attention to.

AMENDMENT NO. 1884

I want to talk on two issues today. I will start first with the crowdfunding amendment that has been offered by Senators BENNET, MERKLEY, and me—something we have been working on in a truly bipartisan manner, as it should be done here, and as I do many of my actions.

For those of you who may be listening either up in the gallery or on television, crowdfunding is an opportunity for individuals to invest money upwards of $1,000, upwards of $1 million total—so $1,000 per person, totaling $1 million—not dealing with a lot of the traditional SEC filings that are in place and a lot of the other problems in which only very wealthy people in years past have been able to participate in these types of offerings.

For example, right now, if I had a good idea, and I wanted some of my friends to invest in it, and then we go and start marketing, we could not do that. That is illegal. One of the President's objectives in his jobs speech was to talk about these new opportunities, and crowdfunding is one of them. He

supports it. The House has done a similar crowdfunding bill. We are actually taking this crowdfunding opportunity and putting a little bit more safeguard in it.

I think our bill is different—well, I know our bill is different than the House bill in that the House bill does not require that you actually are a legal business or even some kind of incorporated legal forum before you try to issue stock. That bothers me somewhat in that you could have somebody in their living room taking people's money and issuing stock with no check and balance, and I think that is important.

It also does not require that you offer securities through an intermediary. You could put up your own Twitter site: Buy shares is my great idea. Come on and buy shares.

All the experts agree that we would need to require an intermediary, say, like an eBay, where the crowd can help identify the good and bad players, the way that eBay uses identified bad sellers on their site.

But also, as I said, it allows investments to take place that cannot be done right now, and allows those entities, those groups, to take that money and either use it as the investment seed money to create those new ideas and new jobs—as we know, startup businesses are the entities that are actually looking to create jobs at this point—and/or use that money as seed money to go to a more traditional lender and say: Hey, we have a great idea and we also have some money to back it up, and we would ask you to sign on with us.

I am hopeful the amendment comes up. I understand it is. I am looking forward to having that very important vote. I would appreciate, obviously, the Presiding Officer and everyone else giving strong consideration to that.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mr. President, I wish to shift gears for a minute and talk about the Violence Against Women Act. As we know—you may not know—Jessica Pripstein of Easthampton, Lisa Stilkey of Douglas, Belinda Torres of Worcester, Kristin Broderick of Haverill, Patricia Frois of Marshfield, Edinalva Viera of Brighton, Milka Rivera of Lawrence, Nazish Noorani of East Boston, Casey Taylor of Winthrop, Alessa Castellon of Roslindale, Lauren Astley of Wayland, Michael Trusty of Edgartown, Janice Santos of Worcester, Beth Spartichino of Easton, Son Tran of Lowell, Jettie Lincoln of Plymouth, David Walton of Tauton, Elaine McCall of Wakefield, Jennifer Freudenthal of Webster, Brian Bergeron of Malden, Lancelot Reid of Dorchester, Joel Echols of Springfield, Maria Avelina Palaguachi-Cela of Brockton, Troy Burston of Medford, Joseph Scott of Worcester, and Aderito Cardoso of Brockton—are constituents of mine who have been killed by their husbands, wives, partners, girlfriends, or boyfriends in domestic violence incidents in 2011 and 2012 alone, and it is only March of this year.

It is unacceptable. The loss of those lives is tragic. But in addition to the people who have lost their lives, the lives of the victims' children, families, and friends have been destroyed. I know because I was a victim of domestic violence. As a child, I watched as my mother was beaten by abusive stepfathers. I did what I could to protect my mom and my sister, but as a young boy there was only so much I could do.

I remember vividly being a 6-year-old boy going to protect my mom and getting beaten on until the police came. It is something that still lives with me, and I try to use that experience and knowledge to help in many different ways.

When I was growing up, quite frankly, there were not the resources that are available to victims today. I wish my mother had known back then that she was not alone. I wish she could have used one of the fantastic support providers that now exist in Massachusetts today. Since being elected to the Senate, I have been moved by the organizations in my State that are stepping to the plate—and continuously step to the plate each and every day—to provide support to victims of domestic violence.

Quite frankly, as a government, we have made tremendous progress in helping victims get their lives back in order—not only the victims themselves but the family members of those victims.

The Violence Against Women Act was first signed into law in 1994, as you know, and made a bold statement that we would redouble our efforts to support law enforcement efforts to crack down on offenders and assist those working in our communities to provide assistance to victims seeking a new life away from the violence they had been subjected to.

In each reauthorization we have improved upon the previous bill and made it stronger and made stronger commitments to those who have been abused. Now is not the time—let me repeat: now is not the time—to take our foot off the gas and avoid dealing with this problem.

The landmark Violence Against Women Act must be reauthorized this year. I am incredibly proud to have cosponsored this reauthorization when it first came to my attention. I believe it makes critical commitments against this horrific problem.

Historically, VAWA has been a bipartisan effort, where both parties locked arms in support of our enforcement and victims against perpetrators of domestic violence. It was a glimmer of hope for an otherwise contentious and overly partisan atmosphere. I have to tell you—this is not the first time I have said this—but there is no Democratic bill that is going to pass, there is no Republican bill that is going to pass, for those listening. It needs to be a bipartisan, bicameral bill that the President will sign.

I have been deeply troubled to see that this year's reauthorization has become, once again, partisan. There is no reason for it. There is no excuse for it. We just did the Hire a Hero veterans bill, we did the 3-percent withholding, we are doing the insider trading, we did the highway bill. There is no reason we cannot do the VAWA bill on a completely nonpartisan basis.

I am on the floor today to call on my colleagues to band together and pass this reauthorization and send a very strong signal to Americans that the Senate—yes, the Senate—stands united in recognizing victims from across the country, to give them the help they need and, obviously, deserve.

In Massachusetts, VAWA is supported by law enforcement and many service providers that are on the front lines in assisting domestic violence victims. I know. Previously, as an attorney, I dealt with family law matters. I know of the yeoman's work these entities do.

On Friday, I will be visiting Voices Against Violence in Framingham, MA. They receive VAWA funding to support direct services to victims and survivors of sexual assault and ensure that a trained rape crisis counselor is available after hours and on weekends.

The YMCA in central Massachusetts in Worcester uses those funds for a proactive program that has service providers working very closely with law enforcement to provide information to domestic violence victims and advocate on their behalf—at a time when, quite frankly, these folks need advocates.

Because of VAWA, REACH Beyond Abuse in Waltham has supported many cutting-edge prevention efforts with teens and the placement of advocates in police departments as a symbiotic, a give-and-take relationship in those departments.

The Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center in Newburyport, where my dad lives, used VAWA funds to establish a high-risk homicide prevention project and was recently recognized by the White House for their work.

I could go on and on and on about the tremendous involvement and great organizations not only in my State but throughout this country that are making a difference in the lives of victims. We need to stand as a body and not get into party rhetoric, and declare to women across America that they are not alone in this fight. We need to do everything in our power to help the millions of women like my mom who were once in this situation and are now survivors. And we need to help them become survivors, not victims. So I call upon my colleagues to join me in sending a very strong bipartisan vote and get this done.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). Will the Senator withhold his request?

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Yes. I am sorry. I did not see the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts for his remarks in support of the Violence Against Women Act. I believe the bill will be before us shortly. We will count on Senator BROWN's vote. So we look forward to that.

TRIBUTES TO SENATOR BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a public servant, a social worker, and a tenacious advocate for vulnerable Americans. I rise today to honor a trailblazer and a mentor for me and countless others. I rise today to honor an outstanding U.S. Senator from Maryland and the dean of the Senate women, my friend BARBARA MIKULSKI.

I am privileged to have represented California in this body for almost 20 years. When I first ran for the Senate, back in 1992, I received a call from BARBARA MIKULSKI, personally urging me on and reaching out to provide encouragement.

I have relied on her advice, her friendship, and the Mikulski brand of candor ever since. As a matter of fact, one of my fondest evenings was a three-onion martini right down the street.

It is hard to believe, but when Senator MIKULSKI took office in 1987, there was only one other woman in this body, Senator Nancy Kassebaum, later Nancy Kassebaum Baker, the great Republican Senator from Kansas. Increasing the number of women in the Senate has been painfully slow. In 1991, the ranks of women in this body rose to three, then later to seven after the 1992 election. Today we have 17 women in this body and 76 in the House. As Senator MIKULSKI reflected in the Washington Post last year:

> Women were so rare even holding statewide political office [back then] . . . I was greeted with a lot of skepticism from my male colleagues. Was I going to go the celebrity route or the Senate route? I had to work very hard.

And she has. BARBARA has worked very hard to become an outstanding legislator and a trailblazing public official. Let me list a few of her firsts. She was the first female Democrat to serve in both Chambers of Congress—that in itself is impressive—the first female Democrat to be elected to the Senate without succeeding her husband or her father; the first woman to chair a Senate appropriations subcommittee; the first woman to serve a quarter century in the Senate; and the first woman elevated to a Senate leadership position.

She is the only current Member of Congress in the National Women's Hall of Fame. And she is not done yet. Just last week, BARB achieved another historic first. According to the Senate Historical Office, she reached 12,858 days of service, becoming the longest serving female Member of Congress in our Nation's history.

Senator MIKULSKI was born and raised in Baltimore. Determined to make a difference in her community—and you know that well, Mr. President—and guided by her Catholic belief and a belief in social justice, she became a social worker, helping at-risk children and educating seniors about Medicare. She once said, ''I feel that I am my brother's keeper and my sister's keeper.'' Social work evolved into community activism when BARB successfully organized communities against a plan to build a highway through Baltimore's Fells Point neighborhood.

Shortly thereafter, in 1971, she was elected to the Baltimore City Council where she served 5 years. That was about the time I was elected to the Board of Supervisors in 1970 in San Francisco. In 1976, she ran for Congress and won, representing Maryland's 3rd District for a decade. She was then elected to the Senate and has won reelection in 1992, 1998, 2004 and 2010 by large majorities.

As I said, BARB is an accomplished legislator. She is also one of the very best. She cares passionately about quality education and ensuring every student has access to higher education. She is a fighter for stem cell research to cure our most tragic and debilitating diseases. She is a tireless advocate for the National Institutes of Health. And she is a leader on women's health, writing law requiring Federal standards for mammograms, and a fearless proponent of breast and cervical cancer screenings and treatment for uninsured women.

We serve together on the Intelligence Committee. She asks some of the most prescient questions. I have seen her commitment to the FBI, to fighting terrorism, and also to cybersecurity where she headed a task force for our committee that has resulted in the cybersecurity legislation newly pending.

Finally, she has led the way to strengthen pay equity for women. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act is the law of the land today because of BARBARA MIKULSKI's effort. As BARB said when we passed the bill:

> I believe that people should be judged solely by their individual skills, competence, unique talent and nothing else in the workplace. Once you get a job because of your skill and talent, you better get equal pay for equal work.

Or, in a manner that best captures BARB's candor, she said, ''Women of America, square your shoulders, put on your lipstick, suit up, and let's close that wage gap once and for all.'' To me, that is classic BARBARA MIKULSKI.

Let me close with a story. Every so often at BARBARA's leadership, the Senate women get together for dinner. There is no agenda or staff, just Republican women, Democratic women, and a lot of lively conversation. We talk about our families, we talk about the workplace, we talk about the world, and, of course, we even talk, to some extent, about this place. Sometimes we enjoy Senator MIKULSKI's world-famous crab cakes, the best you will ever taste, and second only to the Dungeness crab of the west coast, I might add. If you have not, make sure you try the recipe on her Web site. We talk about our families and the way we can work together. It is a throwback to the civility of the Senate. These dinners are when BARB really stands out as the dean of Senate women.

Women in this country have always had to fight for the most basic of rights. I think young women forget that it was not until 1920 that we were able to vote in this country, and it was only because women fought for it. BARB will be the first to say her milestones are symbols of how far she has come. But she will also show us how much farther women have to go.

Today we take it for granted that a woman can be Secretary of State—we have had two—or Speaker of the House—we have had one or a candidate for President. Not quite yet. Oh, no, I take that back. We have had one. And one day soon, a woman will sit in the Oval Office of this great country. When she does, she will owe a great deal to BARBARA MIKULSKI.

But on this day, let the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of this Senate reflect and forever record that Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI is the longest serving woman in the history of the United States Congress, and this country is forever better because of it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I came here to talk on another matter, but I wish to take a few minutes to talk about my friend BARBARA MIKULSKI. We have served a long time together. When she came to this body, I think I may have been chairman of what was then called the Labor and Human Resources Committee, now the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

From the day she got on that committee, she made a difference in every way, not just for women but for every single American in this country. I have a tremendous amount of profound respect for Senator MIKULSKI and what she has been able to accomplish.

Let me mention one thing. Back in the early 1990s, she and I worked together on what was called the FDA Revitalization Act. That act was a very important one, because we had the FDA spread out all over the Greater Washington, DC, area, probably 30, 35 different offices, some of which were in converted chicken coops. It was ridiculous to have these top scientists in anything but a centralized location with top computerization and all of the other scientific instruments they need to do this work for the American people. I have to say that BARBARA MIKULSKI played a pivotal role in helping to

develop that tremendous facility. I want you to know that I do not think it would have been developed without her effort and her dogged work to make sure that we now have a centralized—and it still needs improvement but centralized FDA campus that literally is saving the lives of millions of people and making the lives of millions of people better.

I could go on and on. But I have a lot of respect for my distinguished colleague from Maryland. I would feel badly if I did not get up and tell people how much I do respect her. She believes in what she does. She loves this body, most of the time, I think. And she cares for her follow Senators. We care for her. I want her to know that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues in honoring our friend and colleague who is often regarded as the dean of the women in the Senate, BARBARA MIKULSKI.

Earlier this week Senator MIKULSKI added to her already long list of accomplishments the distinction of being the longest serving female Member of Congress in the history of the United States of America.

Senator MIKULSKI's life is a story of the American dream. Raised in a working-class immigrant family in the east Baltimore neighborhood of Highlandtown, Senator MIKULSKI learned at a young age about the struggles of working families and ethnic Americans and the value of paying it forward.

She helped at her father's grocery store, which opened early in the morning so that steelworkers could buy lunch before their morning shift. She delivered food to seniors and families when parts of her neighborhood were set on fire after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. At one point she even rode on the top of a tank to deliver the groceries.

Senator MIKULSKI's roots helped shape her role today as a mentor, fighter, and true public servant. She worked as a social worker for Catholic Charities, helping at-risk children and counseling seniors on Medicare. She had her start in politics as a community organizer and social worker.

In 1970—one side of BARBARA MIKULSKI her colleagues have certainly seen is her dogged determination—she organized Marylanders to stop a 16-lane highway project that would have threatened Fells Point and another neighborhood in Baltimore. She got the job done. Many people say that work helped to save Fells Point and the Inner Harbor, two of the showcase areas in the great city of Baltimore. She gave a speech at Catholic University to a Catholic conference on the ethnic American. It caught the attention not only of people in Baltimore but far beyond its reach as she talked about her family story and the story of millions just like her.

One year later, she ran for and won a seat on the Baltimore City Council—the first step in her now 41-year career in public service.

Over the course of the Senate's 223-year history, there have only been 38 female Members; the first, Rebecca Latimer Felton, of Georgia, was appointed for political reasons to fill a vacancy, and she served only a single day in 1922.

Senator MIKULSKI has so many firsts in her story of public service. She was the first woman elected to the Senate in her own right—the first—and not because of a husband or father or someone who served before her in higher office. She was the first woman Democrat to serve in both Chambers of Congress—the first. Last year, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame for her trailblazing political career, including, with this recognition today, becoming the longest serving woman Senator in the history of our Nation.

Given her years of experience, it is no wonder other Members of Congress have turned to her for guidance, men and women alike.

I can recall so many meetings of our Democratic caucus when, after a long debate involving many people saying many things, BARBARA MIKULSKI would stand and, in a few terse words, get it right. At the end of the day people would say: That is what we ought to do. She has this insight based on her life experience and her ability to try to peel through the layers of the political onion and get to the heart of the issue.

Following the election of a number of esteemed women into the Senate, a lot of reporters deemed 1992 as ''The Year of the Woman.'' Senator MIKULSKI's response was so typical and so right. This is what she said:

> Calling 1992 the ''year of the woman'' makes it sound like the ''year of the caribou,'' or the ''year of asparagus.'' We are not a fad, a fancy, or a year.

That was typical BARBARA. Senator MIKULSKI rises above and beyond all that. From her first days in the Senate in 1987, she has fought an uphill battle to address the most important issues of national importance.

First and foremost for her is her family, next is her great State of Maryland. She is a fearless advocate, and I know the Presiding Officer knows that better than most as her colleague from that great State.

She has supported educational initiatives, veterans causes, interstate commerce, access to health care and women's health and fair pay.

The Chair knows the answer to this question, but some of those listening to the debate might not. What was the first bill that the newly elected President Barack Obama signed in the White House with a public ceremony? It was a bill BARBARA MIKULSKI pushed hard for, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act, so women going to work all over the United States—not just in the Senate—would get a fair shake when it comes to the compensation for the jobs they did. It was President Obama's first bill. When he signed it, the very first pen he handed over to Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI. I was there and I saw it.

Championed by Senator MIKULSKI, the long-awaited and much needed bill clarifies time limits for workers to file unemployment discrimination lawsuits, making it easier for people to get the pay they deserve regardless of race, age or gender.

I wish to start here—but I don't know where I would end—to talk about the important issues she has worked for. Let me talk about health care for a minute. When we set out to pass this historic affordable health care act, BARBARA was assigned the job to make sure it connected with the families and workers across America in a very real way, to make sure that at the end of the day we weren't talking to ourselves or engaged in political gibberish but passing a law that could literally change a life for the better. She led that effort and made invaluable contributions to the substance of that bill.

We knew those provisions would be important and that they would work because we knew where BARBARA MIKULSKI came from and we knew where her political heart resides. While it is a milestone to celebrate Senator MIKULSKI's distinction as the longest serving woman in the Congress, there is a much greater cause for celebration; Senator MIKULSKI's decades of service to this Nation is an admirable feat for any man or woman.

I extend my congratulations to my colleague and friend Senator MIKULSKI for this milestone. Thank you for what you have done for the Senate, for the State of Maryland, and for our great Nation.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant editor of the Daily Digest proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. 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. REID. Mr. President, the hour of 2:30 having arrived, it is my honor and my pleasure to rise to honor a patriot, a pioneer, and now the longest serving woman in the Congress of the United States ever, and that is the senior Senator from Maryland BARBARA MIKULSKI.

BARBARA and I served together in the House, and we came to the Senate together in 1986. I remember that day so well, when we had our first appearance in the Senate as new Senators. It was quite a moving event for me. But one of the events I remember about that day is the presentation of Senator MIKULSKI.

We all said a word or two, and everything we said will be long forgotten. But what BARBARA MIKULSKI said, in the way she has of saying things, will not be forgotten.

Here is this woman who is not even as tall as my wife, who is 5 feet tall, but she said, ''I slam-dunked Linda Chavez,'' her opponent. That said it all.

That was the beginning of my working closely with this good woman. She has been a friend, an inspiration to me in so many different ways in the time we have served together. When we got on the Environment and Public Works Committee, she was here, and I was here. She was always ahead of me in seniority because of her longer service in the House. On the Appropriations Committee, for more than two decades, I was here, she was here. She was always one ahead of me.

BARBARA was the first Democratic woman elected to the Senate in her own right. Last year, she surpassed the legendary Margaret Chase Smith of Maine as the longest serving woman in the history of the Senate. On Saturday, she officially surpassed Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts, who, by the way, served in the House from 1925 to 1960 as the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress.

Senator MIKULSKI's service—and the service of many female Members of Congress—has paved the way for girls of today to know they can become Senators, they can become professional basketball players, and they can be engineers and doctors. The sky is the place they need to go, and that is where they believe they can go because of the work that has been done by BARBARA MIKULSKI.

When I came to the Senate with her, she was the only woman who served in the Senate as a Democrat. There was one other Republican at the time. Now, since then, Mr. President, I have watched very closely on this side of the aisle. Now we have 12 Democrats, and if the elections turn out the way I hope they do—and I am cautiously optimistic they will—we will have 17 women who are Democrats in the Senate.

She has been truly a trailblazer. We recognize BARBARA's achievements today and her outstanding record as a tireless advocate for the State of Maryland. She grew up in the Highlandtown neighborhood of east Baltimore. She learned the value of hard work by working in and watching her dad, especially, open that family grocery store and work from early in the morning until night. He sold lunch to steelworkers and other people who came by that little grocery store.

In high school she was educated by the nuns at the Institute of Notre Dame. She credits the nuns with instilling in her faith and a thirst for justice. She went on to study at Mount Saint Agnes College, which is now part of Loyola College in Maryland. She earned her master's degree in social work from the University of Maryland.

BARBARA was a social worker and has always been proud of the fact that she has been a social worker. She was employed by Catholic Charities and the City of Baltimore's Department of Social Services. I can imagine what a dynamo she was—and she still is. There is no work harder than being a social worker. The problems one sees and has to deal with are extremely difficult.

During her years as a social worker, she was a powerful voice for children and seniors in need of an advocate. BARBARA MIKULSKI then and now is an advocate. It was there the spark for service and activism was lit, but it was a plan to build a 16-lane highway that fanned the flames that had been lit by her activism.

The highway would have gutted historic Fells Point, a neighborhood that she believed should have been protected. It would have uprooted homeowners in a majority African-American neighborhood. She organized the residents of Fells Point and Baltimore's Inner Harbor and stopped the construction of that highway.

That is a testament to the power of democracy that she believes in with all her soul. Looking back on that triumph, Senator MIKULSKI said:

> I got into politics fighting a highway. In other countries, they take dissidents and put them in jail. In the United States of America, because of the First Amendment, they put you in the United States Senate. God bless America.

She has always been an advocate for the disenfranchised and disadvantaged in this country, but she has also been an advocate for dissidents in other countries, of whom she has spoken so eloquently on so many occasions. Her family was Polish. She has heard all the Polish jokes, and she has withstood a little of the ''barbs'' when neighborhoods were different than they are now. But she took special pleasure and was so proud of her heritage.

BARBARA took a special interest in the plight of Polish people oppressed under communism. We know in 1980 the people of Poland started a fledgling little group called Solidarity—a movement to engage in nonviolent resistance against communism and in support of social change.

Senator MIKULSKI and I had the wonderful pleasure of traveling under the guidance of a trip led by John Glenn—a world famous man then and now. It was a wonderful trip for a couple of new Senators. The Iron Curtain was down, and it was down hard, but we went to Poland on a codel. I can remember we had the opportunity to meet with members of the Solidarity movement. We met in secret with them, in a secret location, and Senator Glenn talked, Senator Stevens, then a senior member of the Senate at the time spoke, and I said I would like to hear from Senator MIKULSKI.

Now, Mr. President, I am not articulate enough to explain the presentation she made extemporaneously, but this powerful woman stood and talked about her heritage and her religion and what that meant to the people of America and what it should mean to the people of Poland. It was truly—and I have told her this personally over the years on several occasions to remind her—one of the most heart-warming, stirring speeches I have ever been present to listen to. She spoke to the people assembled there—there weren't many of them—as a fellow activist. She spoke as an American of Polish descent and a fellow Catholic. She spoke as one of them. When that presentation was completed, everyone knew she was one of them.

It took almost a decade for the Solidarity movement to strike victory in Poland, and I know Senator MIKULSKI's speech was not the reason, but I guarantee you it was one of the reasons they had the audacity and the courage to proceed as they did.

Remember, Poland was an interesting country. It was the only country behind the Iron Curtain where the Communists could not destroy their educational system, and that was because of the strength of the Catholic Church in Poland at that time. Solidarity's victory in Poland inspired a stream of peaceful anti-Communist revolutions that eventually caused the fall of communism entirely all over Eastern Europe.

BARBARA's Polish ancestry and the Polish community in which she grew up in Baltimore were very important to her, but I never knew it until that moment in Warsaw with those few members of Solidarity who were assembled to honor us.

Her great-grandmother had come here from Poland with just a few pennies in her pocket—literally—but she had a dream of a better life for her and her family. This is what BARBARA MIKULSKI said about her great-grandmother.

> She didn't even have the right to vote, and in this great country of ours, in three generations, I joined the United States Senate.

It was a remarkable feat for her. But, more importantly, it was a confirmation of the American dream. For BARBARA, what began as community activism, a fight against a highway, grew into a successful career in public service.

I just want to add a side note, Mr. President, and talk about something very personal to me. When Senator David Pryor got sick, he was the Democratic conference secretary in the Senate. That opened up a spot in the Senate leadership. That was something I thought would be interesting to me. It was known who was interested in filling that spot, and I knew BARBARA was interested.

I went to BARBARA and said: BARBARA, if you want it, it is yours. Two years later, Wendell Ford decided he was going to retire. He was the whip. I can still remember that morning walking from the Hart Building over to the Russell Building, in that long walkway there, and I saw BARBARA MIKULSKI. I didn't say a word to her.

She said: I want to talk to you. She said: You supported me when I wanted to be the conference secretary. You

want to be the whip, I am supporting you. But for BARBARA MIKULSKI, I would not have had that leadership position. Once the Democratic caucus knew BARBARA MIKULSKI supported me, it was all over. I won. And I won because she came to me, as she did that morning.

So, Mr. President, my respect, admiration, and love for this woman is difficult for me to describe, but it is there. BARBARA MIKULSKI ran for Congress and won after serving on the city council of Baltimore for 5 years. She represented Maryland's Third District for 10 years before winning the seat in the Senate she now holds.

Again, I appreciate all she has done for me—so many different things she has done for me. As a very able member of the Appropriations Committee and somebody who loves this institution, I am in awe of the legislative record of this amazing woman.

She has been a dedicated representative not only for the State of Maryland but the State of Nevada. One thing she did for me—and there have been a lot of them—when we were new Senators and she was on one of the subcommittees of the Appropriations Committee concerning veterans benefits and affairs, as a favor to me she traveled to Reno, NV, to look at an old veterans hospital. She went through it and said: This is not the way a veterans hospital should be, and I, BARBARA MIKULSKI, am going to change it. And she did.

Through the appropriations process we renovated and improved that hospital so it was one of the better hospitals at the time. So I am grateful for this good woman, an advocate for parity for women on everything from salary to health care access. But for BARBARA MIKULSKI the National Institutes of Health would not have a center for women. She got a little upset when she learned they had done a study of the effect of aspirin on people's hearts and she realized they had tested 10,000 people and they were all men.

I had a situation that arose in Nevada about at the same time where three women came to me who had something called interstitial cystitis, a devastating, debilitating, painful disease that is described as running slivers of glass up and down your bladder. It was said to be a psychosomatic disease. These women had nowhere to go. I talked to BARBARA MIKULSKI about this, and now 40 percent of these women have medicine that takes away their symptoms totally.

I could go on here a long time, as everyone can see. But I do it because I congratulate BARBARA on this milestone, which is so important to me and the Senate, and to tell her how much Nevada appreciates her. It is not just for Maryland. She has done things for the entire country.

I wish her well for years to come.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is my honor to be here this afternoon to extend, on behalf of the Republican Conference of the U.S. Senate, our respect and admiration for the senior Senator from Maryland on achieving this important milestone.

I am sure she would be the first to tell you that becoming the longest serving woman in the Congress wasn't easy. A life in public service is filled with many highs and lows. But BARBARA is nothing if not both tough and resilient.

BARBARA would point to her upbringing as the daughter of a Baltimore grocer, where she learned firsthand how hard work, honesty, and determination can lead to a successful and rewarding life. She later learned, while fighting a freeway that would have destroyed several Baltimore communities, including her own, that if you fought hard enough for something you believed in, you too can make a difference. So if you knew BARBARA back then, it wouldn't surprise you we are honoring her today.

Last year, when Senator MIKULSKI became the longest serving female Senator, she said she never saw herself as a historical figure. To me, BARBARA said, history is powdered wigs and Jane Addams and Abigail Adams, both pioneers in their own right.

However, BARBARA is a pioneer. She is only the second woman to be elected to both the Senate and the House. When first elected in 1986, she was only the 16th woman to serve. Today, in Congress, there are 76 women in the House and 17 in the Senate. As dean of the Senate women, she served as a role model and a mentor to many of these women. To put this in perspective: When she first arrived in the Senate, there weren't any natural mentors to teach her the ways of the Senate. At the time, even the Senate gym was off limits. A lot has changed since then, and BARBARA had a lot to do with it.

Later, as more women were elected to the Senate, BARBARA worked with them to help them understand the Senate and how best to be an effective Senator, both here and back home. She wanted to give back.

Most importantly, regardless of party or issue, BARBARA would push her female colleagues in the Senate to think differently, encouraging them to think of themselves as a force—a force of good and, oft times, a force for change. I know many are grateful not only for BARBARA's leadership and courage but for her willingness to take the time to share her experiences with them. I don't want to just be a first, BARBARA once said. I want to be the first of many.

In 35 years, nearly 13,000 days as a Member of Congress, BARBARA has been a champion of the space program, science research, welfare reform, major transportation, homeland security, and environmental issues in Maryland.

I wish to recognize BARBARA not only for the tremendous accomplishment as the longest serving female in the history of the United States in Congress but also for all of her many accomplishments in the House and the Senate. As she once said herself, it is not how long you serve, but it is how well you serve.

I wish to recognize BARBARA for the pioneering model she has been to so many women in her distinguished career.

Congratulations, Senator MIKULSKI.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. STABENOW). The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, Senator MCCONNELL and I have tentatively worked out something so we will have votes tomorrow, not today. That being the case, we are not under a crunch for time here today.

We have a number of Senators here who wish to say something regarding Senator MIKULSKI, and I wish to set up an orderly time to do that. So I ask that Senator MIKULSKI be recognized. Following that, we have Senator CARDIN to be recognized for 10 minutes; Senator BOXER, 10 minutes. Senator KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON has been here since before anybody else. So following Senator BOXER, I ask that she be recognized. And Senator GILLIBRAND?

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. At the conclusion of my colleagues' remarks, 3 minutes.

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

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I know there are a lot of us who want to pay our tribute and respect to the senior Senator from Maryland, Senator MIKULSKI. I want to make sure everybody has their opportunity. Are we operating under a consent order?

Mr. REID. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The consent order to this point has Senator CARDIN, followed by Senator BOXER, and then Senator HUTCHISON. Senator KERRY is asking to be recognized.

Mr. KERRY. I believe he included my name for 10 minutes at the same time. Madam President, I believe Senator REID included my name in that list for 10 minutes—I ask unanimous consent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. Senator KERRY will be added, and a complete list will be put together.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I am glad we could get that straight.

Let me first thank all of our colleagues who are here to pay honor to the senior Senator from Maryland, Senator MIKULSKI.

This is March Madness in basketball. Sweet 16 is starting. We are very proud in Maryland of our Lady Terps. They are in the Sweet 16. But I want you to know that we are all getting our fantasy teams, and I want Senator MIKULSKI on my fantasy basketball team because she is a true leader, she understands the importance of working together, and she is a winner.

We are proud of her roots in Maryland. She is the great-granddaughter of Polish immigrants who owned a bakery. She began her public service in

high school, where she helped deliver groceries to seniors who were locked in their apartments and she helped the homebound seniors get the food they needed. She went to the University of Maryland School of Social Work because she wanted to be a social worker. She wanted to help other people. She knew that she was good at that and she could make a difference in people's lives. She worked for Catholic Charities and dealt with children at risk and helping seniors with Medicare.

As you have heard from several of my colleagues already, she gained her reputation by taking on a highway that was scheduled to be built that would have gone through Canton and Fells Point, disrupting a neighborhood in Baltimore. This was a 16-lane highway. It was considered to be a done deal; it was going to happen. The powers that be said we are going to have a highway coming through downtown Baltimore. The powers to be did not know BARBARA MIKULSKI. That highway never happened. Senator MIKULSKI stopped that highway from being built.

She then went on to serve in the Baltimore City Council with great distinction. Then in 1976 she was elected to the Congress for the Third Congressional District, a seat that was vacated by our esteemed colleague Paul Sarbanes, who then came into the Senate, and BARBARA MIKULSKI followed in the great tradition of Senator Paul Sarbanes. In 1986, when Senator ''Mac'' Mathias's seat became vacant, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI was elected to the Senate.

She has many firsts: The first female Democrat elected in her own right to serve the United States Senate. At the time she was elected to the Senate, she was only one of two female Senators. Today, we have 17 female Senators in the Senate in large part because of Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI. I know the Presiding Officer was part of that expansion. You will hear how Senator MIKULSKI was not only a role model and an inspiration but an incredible help to get more women elected to the Senate.

Last year we joined in this body to celebrate Senator MIKULSKI becoming the longest serving woman in the history of the Senate, surpassing Margaret Chase Smith from the State of Maine. Then on this past Saturday, on St. Patrick's Day, she became the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress, replacing Edith Nourse Rogers from Massachusetts who served, as the majority leader pointed out, from 1925 to 1960.

Marylanders understand longevity records. We are very proud of Cal Ripken and the record he held in baseball. Senator MIKULSKI's, like Cal Ripken's, legacy is what she has done in office to make a difference, not the length of her service. She is a fierce and effective advocate for so many causes. We have heard about her accomplishments in education and health care, what she has done to advance sensible health care to improve quality for the people of this country. That was her mission in the Affordable Care Act, to make sure that we had the delivery systems in place that would deliver quality health care, and Senator MIKULSKI's leadership was critical in that regard.

She has been a leader in women's health care issues. I will never forget her reminder to all of us in the caucus: Don't forget women's health care issues when you bring that bill to the floor. And we didn't. We put that in under Senator MIKULSKI's leadership. We talked about breast cancer and cervical cancer screenings. Senator MIKULSKI has been in the leadership on all those issues.

We in Maryland are proud to be where the National Institutes of Health is headquartered. Its growth in large measure has been the result of Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI. We are proud of HOPE VI and housing. Senator MIKULSKI has been in the forefront of that program, making it possible for many people in our community to have decent, affordable, and safe housing.

Senator MIKULSKI has been critically important to America's space program. I have been with her many times at Goddard and seen firsthand the results of her advocacy and what it has meant. The Hubble space telescope is another legacy of which Senator MIKULSKI can be rightly proud.

We in Maryland are also proud to house NSA, the National Security Agency, with its new mission with the cyber command located in Maryland. Senator MIKULSKI, as Senator FEINSTEIN pointed out, has been one of the real leaders on national security issues. We can't issue press releases on this. She is a member of the intelligence committee. She works behind closed doors to keep us safe. But we all know that she is one of the key leaders in this Nation on national security issues.

We know about pay equity and the Lilly Ledbetter law, the first bill signed by President Obama. It was Senator MIKULSKI's leadership that got that bill to the President's desk, recognizing that we are still not where we need to be on gender pay equity in America.

In our region, the Chesapeake Bay is center to our way of life and our economy. Senator MIKULSKI has been one of the real champions on water quality and the Chesapeake Bay. She understands the respect for State and local government, that we have to work together as a team. I know the Governor of Maryland, Governor O'Malley, would agree with me that there is no better friend to the people of Maryland working with the State than Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, getting the Federal Government on the same page as the State and local governments to get things done for the people of Maryland. That is true with what she has been able to do for all of us working across the Nation.

I think the Baltimore Sun put it best when it said:

> There is nobody more feisty, more willing to take on big business, big government, or anyone when it is time to look out for the interests of her constituents.

I think all of us would agree.

On a personal note, I thank Senator MIKULSKI for her friendship, I thank her for being my buddy and my adviser. Whether she is with Presidents or Kings or the patrons at Jimmy's Restaurant in Fells Point, you get the same common sense, the same down-to-earth person—you get Senator BARB. We are so proud of her.

Thank you, Senator BARB, for what you have done to make this Nation a better place to live. Thank you for being such a role model for young people, especially young women, to get involved, to make a difference. Thank you on behalf of my two granddaughters. Their future is much brighter, their opportunities are much greater because of you, Senator BARB.

Congratulations. Your colleagues here want to express our love and respect and admiration for your incredible service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, what an incredible milestone Senator MIKULSKI has reached. The words of her colleagues and the love they feel for her are coming through. It is a wonderful thing for me to be part of this tribute. I don't know how many Senators would have the Governor of their State here—Your Honor; and the former distinguished, incredible Senator Paul Sarbanes is here. That in itself, Senator MIKULSKI, is testimony to your status among all of us.

So many of us are here in the Senate because BARBARA MIKULSKI knocked down the barriers one by one—the first Democratic woman ever elected to the Senate in her own right, the first woman to serve in both Chambers, the longest serving woman in the Senate. Now she has made history once again. This past Saturday, after 12,858 distinguished days of service, no other woman in history has served in Congress longer than Senator MIKULSKI—ever.

Some trailblazers make history, and they are content to stand proudly alone. ''Aren't I great? I did it.'' But not Senator MIKULSKI. She always made clear that she was honored to be the first Democratic woman, but she never wanted to be the last.

I will never forget her saying:

> Some women stare out the window waiting for Prince Charming. I stare out the window waiting for more women Senators.

Well, 17 women, Republicans and Democrats, now serve in the Senate. I know all of us have stories to tell about how Senator MIKULSKI helped us along the way, reaching out to mentor us, encourage us, lead us and organize our regular meetings filled with folders and pens and pencils, and organizing dinners. She and Senator HUTCHISON teamed up. We are so fortunate to have

them working together. We get together now and then. Just in the heat of debate, we sit down and break bread together.

When I considered running for the Senate in 1992, Senator MIKULSKI was the very first person I went to see, after my husband. I was conflicted. I had a good House seat. I was told I could hold it for as long as I wanted, and I was not sure I should give it up for the Senate. I was considered a long shot. Senator MIKULSKI told me the following: ''If you run, and I want you to run,'' she said, ''it will be the toughest thing you will ever do and the best thing you will ever do.'' And she was right.

Those of us of a certain age have probably seen the play or the movie ''A Man For All Seasons.'' Today we celebrate a woman who is truly a Senator for all seasons. Some Members have passion, others have policy skills, some are brilliant negotiators, others great advocates for the least among us, some are very serious students of history, and others are flatout hilarious. But I do not think our country has ever seen so many incredible traits combined in one Senator. Whatever the issue, she will address it. Whatever the problem, she will solve it. Whatever the wrong, she will fix it. Whatever the need, she will meet it. Whenever and wherever people without a voice need a champion with a keen mind, a sharp wit, and an unparalleled ability to speak from the heart and get things done, BARBARA MIKULSKI is there. A lot of us have been there with her, and we have watched her and we love it and we marvel at her. And she does it with a sense of humor that is unparalleled. Anyone who has ever listened to a speech or interview with Senator MIKULSKI has heard her utter these incredible quips, which I fondly called ''Mikulski-isms.''

She has called us women into battle by asking us to go ''earring to earring'' with our opponents. She has challenged us to square our shoulders, suit up, put our lipstick on, and fight. She has said often that women do not want to talk about gender but an agenda that helps America's families.

When asked by Glamour Magazine how she felt about being named Glamour's Woman of the Year along with singer Madonna, Senator MIKULSKI replied, ''She's got her assets, I have mine, and we both make the best of what God has given us.''

When asked about the different perspective women bring, she often says, ''Women, we are not so much about macro issues but, rather, the macaroni and cheese issues.'' Who else could say that better?

When discussing the challenges women face in politics with a group of female parliamentarians from around the world, this is what BARBARA MIKULSKI explained to them when they asked about what is it like and is it tough. She said:

> Let's put it this way. In an election, if you are married, you are neglecting him; if you are single, you couldn't get him; if you are divorced, you couldn't keep him; and if you are widowed, you killed him.

Then there was one of my favorite Mikulski moments. This is a treasured moment. The women of the House still hadn't managed to integrate the House gym, so we were relegated to this tiny room with old-fashioned, hooded hair dryers and hardly any room to move. But there were very few of us, and we decided to make the most of it by having an aerobics class. Of course, coming from California, I organized it.

In came Geraldine Ferraro, Barbara Kennelly, OLYMPIA SNOWE, BARBARA MIKULSKI, and me. Our instructor started the class by asking us to stretch our arms way up, and we do.

Groans.

''Put your hands on your hips.''

More groans.

Now she says, ''Bend from the waist.''

Suddenly, a voice bellows from the back of the room: ''If I had a waist, I wouldn't be here.''

We all turned around to see Senator MIKULSKI, and we just cracked up. Needless to say, that was the end of the aerobics class.

As funny as she can be, I can't think of anyone more resilient than BARBARA MIKULSKI. I remember when she was mugged a few years back, one evening outside her home in Baltimore. A man pushed her to the ground and grabbed her purse. It was terrifying—for the mugger. He had no idea whom he was dealing with. At 4 feet 11, Senator MIKULSKI fought back and defended herself, just like she defends the people she represents, just like she defends women and families, just like she defends equal pay and equal rights and civil rights and the health care of our citizens and the dignity of our seniors.

The truth is, the Senate used to be a very lonely place for women, but Senator MIKULSKI changed that. From the day she was first sworn in, she has carried the challenges, the hopes, and the dreams of millions of women with her. BARBARA MIKULSKI has inspired generations of young women everywhere. She has given them the confidence that they can do it, too, because even as we celebrate this incredible milestone, I know Senator MIKULSKI's greatest hope is that a young girl growing up today will be inspired to follow in her footsteps and one day to break her record. When that happens, it will be because BARBARA MIKULSKI—our dean, our cherished leader, our Senator for all seasons—opened the doors of the Senate wide enough to let the women of America walk in.

Thank you, BARBARA MIKULSKI.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I am pleased to stand and add my experiences with and admiration for Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI. It is fitting that she is now the longest serving woman in the U.S. Congress.

When I first got here—I was elected in 1993—BARBARA MIKULSKI, as the dean of the women in the Senate, had a workshop the previous year for the newly elected Democratic women Senators. When I arrived in 1993, she expanded it to include all new women Senators, and her sort of opening comment was, civility starts with us.

Surely, she has carried through as the dean of the women of the Senate to ensure that all the new women get their bearings in the Senate, that they get the advice of the ones who have been here before. It has been a huge help and really a fun opportunity for us to get to know each other on a personal level as we have our women Senators' dinners.

From this came a book Senator MIKULSKI and I worked on together. The genesis of the book—which became ''Nine and Counting,'' the nine women Senators who were here in the year 2000—came from a meeting called by Senator MIKULSKI to meet with the women of Northern Ireland, along with the women of Ireland, when there was so much strife in that country. BARBARA MIKULSKI called all of the women Senators together, our nine, to give encouragement and advice to the women who were trying to bring the people of Ireland and Northern Ireland together so that there could be a peaceful conclusion to the conflicts in Northern Ireland. From that, as we were sharing our stories to show the women of Northern Ireland how much they could do, from our experiences and our overcoming of obstacles, BARBARA MIKULSKI and I sat down and said:

> You know, I think we have a book here. If each of the nine women Senators could write a chapter about our obstacles and our beginnings in politics and help encourage other young women and girls to aspire to and be able to succeed in politics, then we ought to do it.

So we worked with a publisher. We got together and decided how we would lay it out. We then decided as a group that we would give all of the proceeds to the Girl Scouts of America because almost each of us had been a Girl Scout at one point.

From so from that we put a book out, which is still being sold here in the Senate bookshop called ''Nine and Counting.'' It has given a lot of money to the Girl Scouts of America, to a leadership fund so that they can continue to create girls who will be leaders in our country. But that started with the meeting BARBARA put together for those of us who could maybe give advice and help these women of Northern Ireland.

When I came into the Senate in 1993, the first thing I wanted to do was give equal treatment to women who work at home in their ability to save for retirement as those who workout outside the home. I had the experience, as a single working woman, of putting aside some money for my IRA, and then when I married my husband Ray, I found out I could put aside only $250 in an IRA. I said: Wait a minute. Why would someone working inside the home—a woman

who is probably going to need retirement security more than any of us—not be able to save for her own retirement security if she is a married woman? So I authored the Homemaker IRA, and of course I wanted to have a Democrat lead because we had a Democratic Congress. So I asked Senator MIKULSKI, and she said she would absolutely sign on—as she always does—when it is something that is going to benefit women. So it became the Hutchison-Mikulski bill. I said to BARBARA: I want this bill to pass. I don't care if my name is first. I would love to put your name first if you think that will help us get it through. She said: Absolutely not. I would not take your name off that bill for anything because it was your idea. There are not very many people in this body who would make that gesture and also put her weight behind the passage of the bill.

Of all the things I have done and that we have done together, BARBARA, and of all the things that bill is going to affect the most people in our country because now we have the Homemaker IRA that passed in 1996 that allows women—whether they are married and working at home or outside the home and single or married—they will be able to set aside the same amount. Fortunately, that amount has grown, and so it is not $2,000, but it can be $2,500 or $3,000 or $5,000, depending on their age. It is a wonderful thing we were able to do together.

Senator MIKULSKI and I also worked on behalf of Afghan women. When we started hearing the atrocities that were happening to the women of Afghanistan that were brought back by great women's organizations, such as Vital Voices, that told stories of not only unequal treatment of women in Afghanistan but inhumane treatment of women in Afghanistan. Senator MIKULSKI, Senator Clinton, and I introduced the Afghan Women and Children Relief Act, which was signed into law in December of 2001, which authorized funding for women in Afghanistan and Afghan refugee women. Political participation was supported for Afghan women, and we followed up with appropriations. I have to say our Republican President, President Bush, and our Democratic President, President Obama, have always said American money will go into Afghanistan or Iraq or anywhere else to support equally the education of girls and boys; that we would support women where they are not being treated as equals on a human rights basis. So our Presidents have stood and, of course, our bipartisanship in Congress has done the right thing. Again, Senator MIKULSKI is a leader in that area.

I cannot think of a stronger supporter in this Senate than BARBARA MIKULSKI in the area of NASA. I wish to say Senator BILL NELSON also has been such a strong supporter, as well as Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, but Senator MIKULSKI and I now are the—she is the chairman and I am the ranking Republican on the committee that is appropriating for NASA. We are also fortunate to have Chairman JAY ROCKEFELLER on the authorizing and oversight committee for NASA. He, too, has been such a strong leader in assuring that we continue America's preeminence in space.

When the rubber hits the road in appropriations, Senator MIKULSKI has been there to say: We are going to have the science in the Hubble telescope, which has given us so much information, as well the James Webb telescope. Now, of course, we have the human space flight issues and BARBARA MIKULSKI has been right there saying, of course we are going to utilize the International Space Station, of course we are going to keep America's priorities in space because it has done so much for our economy and our jobs and our technology and our health care improvements, but it has also been a national security issue that BARBARA MIKULSKI recognizes, first and foremost.

I cannot match a lot of the stories about BARBARA MIKULSKI and her personality, but I can tell you I took BARBARA MIKULSKI to tour the Johnson Space Center in 2001, and we did a wonderful event at Baylor College of Medicine to talk about the research that is being done in the biomedical sciences and on the space station. I thought, I am going to bring BARBARA where we can show her a little bit of Texas.

We know Texas has a lot of personality and sometimes we are thought to have a little too much fun, but I will tell you what, BARBARA is one of us. I brought her to the Houston rodeo. During the month of the Houston rodeo, everybody is ''Go Texas,'' and everybody dresses Texan, which means cowboy, and we have a great time. So I took BARBARA MIKULSKI into the steer auction, where just this past Saturday a steer was sold for $460,000.

It is a grand champion steer, I might say. All of that money goes for scholarships for our young people to go to college.

BARBARA came into the steer auction, and she looked around. There were 2,000 people at the breakfast before all these people are going to go and bid on the steers so we can fund scholarships. We were all dressed appropriately for Texas, and she reached over to my ear and she whispered: Now, KAY, if we were here on Monday morning and we went to a chamber of commerce meeting, do these people look like this? I love to tell that story in Houston because it gets huge laughs. She won over everybody in Houston. They adored her from the beginning. She put on her cowboy hat, she rode in the grand entry on a buckboard and she became an honorary Texan in our hearts. So BARBARA MIKULSKI knows how to win over others.

Let me mention one of my early experiences when I first came into the Senate. There was an effort to have health care reform. A program was put forward and this particular program had some things that were good, but one of the things in it was that no health insurance coverage would be required for women to have mammograms if they were 40 or below. I will tell you something, the biggest eruption in the Senate was BARBARA MIKULSKI saying: Are you kidding? I will not let this go by me in the Senate. We are not going to say that a woman who is 40 or under is not going to be eligible for insurance coverage for a mammogram. It is not going to happen. BARBARA MIKULSKI took the lead, and I am going to tell you, the first thing that came out of that plan was that provision, and it will never be in a plan as long as BARBARA MIKULSKI is in the Senate. So I am just going to tell anybody who is looking at health care reform, take a little advice, don't mess with BARBARA MIKULSKI because we are going to have mammograms.

Not only that, BARBARA MIKULSKI came forward in the next month and passed unanimously in the Senate a mammogram standards bill. During this process she learned that there were varying degrees of standards of mammography. She was going to make sure there were standards that every clinic would have, that every piece of equipment would have and she led the effort. It is law today.

I will end with yet another accomplishment; that is, single-sex education in public schools. Senator Jack Danforth of Missouri started looking at the issue and said: We need to allow our public schools to offer single-sex education—meaning girl schools and boy schools—because so many of us have seen that we have to adapt education for the needs of each individual child to the best of our ability. We know there are so many wonderful private schools for boys and girls, but we could hardly have a public school that would be single sex in this country in the 1990s.

So Jack Danforth started the effort, and when he left the Senate, I picked it up. The more I looked at it, the more I saw the benefits to boys and to girls—particularly in the middle and high school grades—were palpable. Senators Clinton, BARBARA MIKULSKI, SUSAN COLLINS, the three of them, had gone to an all-girls school. I had not, but they knew the benefits firsthand of single-sex education. BARBARA was the product of single-sex education, having gone to a parochial school.

I first introduced the amendment in 1998, but it was in 2001—when the four of us came together—that we actually got the bill passed through an amendment and that amendment then not only made public single-sex education an option and legal, it also made it eligible for Federal funding grants similar to all our public schools.

I wish to say it has been one of the joys of my time in the Senate to work with Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, and I think this 4-foot-11-inch mighty-might has 10 times the impact. She has made an impact on Congress and an impact

on America because she is relentless, she is reasonable, she understands an issue, and she understands the importance of listening as well as talking. She is effective and she is respected. If there is anyone in the Senate who doesn't like her, respect her, and work well with her, I have not met them. When one is the longest serving woman in the Senate and Congress, they have worked with a lot of people. She is unanimously so well regarded, I have never met an enemy of hers.

I will close by saying the people who know her best love her most, and I cannot think of a finer thing to say about any person.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, first of all, I wish to say what a pleasure it is to welcome Senator Sarbanes back. I had the pleasure of sitting beside him on the Foreign Relations Committee for 24 years. We miss his judgment and wisdom. We could use it these days.

I wish to welcome Governor O'Malley. I can't think of a time, when people have stood up to laud a fellow Senator, that a Governor of their State is sitting and listening. All of the comments to this moment and beyond will undoubtedly echo the remarkable affection that everybody has for BARBARA MIKULSKI and particularly the high regard in which she is held.

This is a very special celebration for the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress, 12,862 days today and counting. In that time—I recall when I first came here there was one woman serving, and that was Senator Nancy Kassebaum—it is fair to say BARBARA MIKULSKI has been one of the pivotal forces in creating and assembling what I would call a true ''band of sisters''—the women with whom she has served in the Senate, each of whom makes extraordinary contributions to this institution.

We have heard from other colleagues that her career is filled with milestones, and it is. She is the first Democratic woman to serve in both Houses of Congress. She is the first Democratic woman elected to Senate leadership. She is the first woman elected to statewide office in Maryland. These are just a few.

When BARBARA came to the Senate in 1986 after 10 years in the House of Representatives, women were still, as she describes it—these are her words—''a bit of a novelty'' in the Senate. Indeed, then, it was only BARBARA and Senator Nancy Kassebaum. But now BARBARA says:

> We're not viewed as novelties. We're not viewed as celebrities. We're viewed as U.S. Senators.

One of the reasons for that is that BARBARA MIKULSKI has demonstrated a seriousness of purpose, an ability to legislate, and an ability to make friends and bring people together that has defined her role as the dean of the women in the Senate.

Some of her women colleagues in the Senate call her Dean. Others call her Coach BARB. But no matter what they call her, she has brought them together in this bipartisan sisterhood, as we just heard from the Senator from Texas. She holds workshops and serves as a mentor to all newcomers and organizes regular monthly dinners. They don't always agree on everything, but the dinners are what some of them have called a ''zone of civility,'' which is something the Senate could use a little more of these days. Again, it is BARBARA MIKULSKI's example that helps point us in that direction.

But for all of her firsts, I would say to my colleagues that BARBARA MIKULSKI's career has never been about gender as much as it has been about agenda. I have had the privilege of working with her enough on different issues of being what she calls one of her Galahads. I have seen her laser focus on what is right, on her conscience, on her gut, on her sense of what the people of Maryland want, and what she thinks is her duty as a Senator. That is why I wanted her on the Speaker's platform in 2004 in Boston at the convention, and she delivered just the right message in her forceful and commanding way. She stood up there and declared:

> When women seek power, we don't seek it for ourselves; we seek it to make a difference in the lives of other people.

There is no arguing, as we heard from a number of colleagues, about what an extraordinary difference BARBARA MIKULSKI has made in the lives of other people, not just Marylanders but all Americans. She has been an extraordinary advocate for the Goddard Space Center, for the Wallops Flight Facility, and for Johns Hopkins Applied Science Lab in Maryland, as well as the Port of Baltimore and Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts.

For decades, she proudly worked beside my colleague of 26 years Ted Kennedy. She loved Ted Kennedy and Ted Kennedy loved her. Together, on the Health Committee, they worked to make universal health care a reality. Her role when Senator Kennedy was sick was an extraordinary role of picking up that baton and helping to bring it across the finish line.

Along the way she became a leader on women's health, fighting for equality in health research and making sure women get the quality of care they deserve. She was one of the chief sponsors of Medicaid financing of mammograms and Pap smears.

Personally, I will never forget how BARBARA reacted when the National Institutes of Health said it would not include women in trials of aspirin as a preventive for heart attacks because ''their hormones present too many biological variables.'' BARBARA fired back: ''My hormones rage because of comments like that.''

Her proudest accomplishment, she says, is the Spousal Anti-Impoverishment Act, which helps to keep seniors from going bankrupt while paying for a spouse's nursing home care. But throughout her career, BARBARA MIKULSKI has fought to strengthen the safety net for children, for seniors, and for anyone who needed somebody to stand for them or push open a door for them.

That fight started in east Baltimore where her Polish immigrant grandparents ran a bakery and her father a grocery store. She says she often watched her father open the doors to his grocery store for local steelworkers so they could buy their lunches before the morning shift. She got it in her head at that time that she would rather be opening doors for others on the inside than knocking on doors from the outside.

So no surprise, after college she got a job as a social worker helping at-risk children and educating seniors about Medicare. She got involved in politics by organizing community groups to stop a highway from going through the Highlandtown neighborhood where she grew up. Let me tell my colleagues, nobody had ever seen anything like her. At one rally, she jumped up on a table and cried:

> The British couldn't take Fells Point, the termites couldn't take Fells Point, and goddamn if we'll let the State Roads Commission take Fells Point.

As they say on ESPN, the crowd went nuts, and the roads commission never knew what hit them. And I assure my colleagues, that was a nonprofane use of our Lord's name.

Again, no surprise, that led to her election to the Baltimore City Council. I think that explains a lot about just how good a politician she is—how well she knows the street. I think every one of her colleagues, all of us, are in awe of BARBARA's ability to focus on the street emotion, on the simplicity of an argument, and to be able to sum it up in a razor-like comment that just cuts to the quick and makes the rest of us who search around for the words seem pretty inept in the process. Whether it is at Camden Yards, Fells Point, the Eastern Shore, the Washington suburbs, or up along the Mason Dixon Line, BARBARA has her finger on the political pulse of Marylanders. She understands their concerns, shares their aspirations, and sums up their hopes and their dreams in a few short sentences that nobody else can parallel.

If anyone expected BARBARA MIKULSKI to accept being just a novelty or a celebrity in Congress, they obviously had no understanding of her deep roots as an immigrant, being an American, and the values she learned about hard work in her family.

If anyone expects her to slow down just because she is now the longest serving woman in the history of Congress, they don't know BARBARA MIKULSKI. A couple of years ago, BARBARA and I talked—I think it was at one of our retreats—about how similar Maryland and Massachusetts are in certain ways, especially their rural and fishing histories which we actually both have.

She told me she wasn't much of a fisherman, but she liked to hunt. The only problem she cited was the recoil of the rifle given that she stands 4 feet 11 inches tall.

Well, it is clear from the record, clear from the comments of all of her colleagues, and clear from this extraordinary longest serving record in the Congress and all that she has accomplished that she stands as one of the tallest Senators and packs a punch way beyond her 4 feet 11 inches.

We are proud to have her as a colleague, and we are in awe of her ability to galvanize action, which is what this institution should be all about.

Mr. LEVIN. When you read over the long list of Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI's accomplishments, one word keeps coming up, ''first.'' First woman to be elected to the Senate from Maryland, first woman of her party to serve in both the House of Representatives and in the Senate, first woman to serve in the Senate leadership. Today we gather to honor Senator MIKULSKI, who in addition to her many firsts, now stands as the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress.

Senator MIKULSKI began her service in Congress in 1976, and in all her time here since, she has championed the causes dearest to her—causes dear to the needs of her constituents and to our Nation's most vulnerable citizens.

As chairwoman of the Children and Families Subcommittee, Senator MIKULSKI has been a determined champion of the young, the old, and the sick. She has fought for access to higher education for every child because she believes ours is a nation where every young boy and girl should have the chance to reach his or her true potential. She has fought for secure pensions for seniors because she believes ours is a nation where, after a lifetime of work, every person should have the chance to enjoy their retirement. And she has fought for preventive screening and treatment for every woman because she believes ours is a nation where no one should lose a mother, daughter, or wife from a preventable illness.

As chairwoman of the Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator MIKULSKI has led the charge to promote economic development, equip our first responders, and invest in science and research. Senator MIKULSKI understands the importance of the private sector, particularly small businesses, in creating job opportunities. That is why she has fought for legislation making it easier for businesses to make investments and hire new workers. No one has fought harder to support our emergency first responders than BARBARA MIKULSKI, who said:

> We must protect our protectors with more than just words—we must protect them with the best equipment, training and resources.

Senator MIKULSKI is also committed to the promotion of scientific research and laying the groundwork for maintaining U.S. leadership in the area. She has advanced legislation to substantially increase the number of students earning degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math.

As a Senator from Maryland, Senator MIKULSKI understands the importance of the Federal workforce. Many of her constituents are responsible for the high quality of life many of us take for granted every day. Whether its food inspectors, air traffic controllers, or medical researchers, many Marylanders who make up the Federal workforce contribute to our Nation's health and safety. Fortunately for them, and the rest of us, they have a powerful advocate in the Senate. Senator MIKULSKI said, ''I want every Federal employee to know I am on their side.'' Indeed she is—not only because it is in the interests of her State, but because she knows well that an effective Federal workforce is in the interests of every citizen in every State. Throughout her career, Senator MIKULSKI has fought off misguided efforts to privatize essential functions of the Federal workforce, and fought for fair pay and benefits for these committed public servants.

Fair pay has been a focus for Senator MIKULSKI, and women across the country can be grateful for that. In 2007, the Supreme Court considered the case of Lilly Ledbetter, a woman who for nearly 20 years had been paid less than her male coworkers for equal work. In its decision, the Court ruled that Ms. Ledbetter could not proceed with her case, not because it had no merit, it did; but because of a technicality. Once the Supreme Court rules against you, where can you turn? Just ask Ms. Ledbetter; she will tell you. Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI introduced the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to address the flawed Supreme Court decision; and on January 29, 2009, it was signed into law.

In the Book of Genesis, the first question asked of God is ''Am I my brother's keeper?'' Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI has spent a lifetime and built a career in answer of that question. She said:

> I feel that I am my brother's keeper and my sister's keeper. I think that's why I am shaped by the words of Jesus himself: Love they neighbor. And I took it seriously.

The Senate is better off because she did. The people of Maryland are better off. Our Nation is better off. I am grateful not just because she has become the longest serving woman in the history of Congress, but because she has served her Nation so well.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today I wish to offer my heartfelt congratulations to my esteemed colleague and dear friend, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, on becoming the longest serving woman in the history of the United States Congress. This milestone, reached on March 17, marks 12,858 days—more than 35 years—of dedicated service to her beloved State of Maryland and to our Nation.

A little more than a year ago, in January of 2011, Senator MIKULSKI began her 25th year in the Senate, surpassing my personal role model in public service, Senator Margaret Chase Smith, the Great Lady from Maine. Adding in her 10 years in the House, Senator MIKULSKI now establishes the record for longevity in either chamber, set by Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers, who represented Massachusetts but was born in Maine.

For me, the special meaning of this occasion goes far beyond such coincidences. Just as Congresswoman Rogers and Senator Smith inspired young women in the past to lives in public service, Senator MIKULSKI inspires the young women of today. As a new Senator in 1997, I was welcomed by her kindness and helped by her wisdom. She taught me the ropes of the appropriations process and instituted regular bipartisan dinners for the women of the Senate.

It has been a privilege to work with Senator MIKULSKI for 15 years. During that time, I have come to know her as a fighter and a trailblazer.

Senator MIKULSKI is, above all, a hard worker. Growing up in east Baltimore, she learned the value of hard work at her family's grocery store. Her commitment to making a difference in her neighborhood led her to the path of service, first as social worker, then as a city councilor and as a Member of Congress.

Senator MIKULSKI's longevity is only the preface to her story of exceptional accomplishment. She has fought for increased access to higher education for our young people and for improved health care for our seniors. I am proud to have fought at her side on those issues, as well as for increased Alzheimer's research, improved women's health care, and enhanced educational opportunities for nurses.

As House colleagues during and after World War II, Margaret Chase Smith and Edith Nourse Rogers were instrumental in achieving full recognition for women in uniform. Senator MIKULSKI carries on that legacy as a determined advocate for all who serve our country. Working with her on the Appropriations Committee, I have witnessed firsthand how seriously she takes her responsibility to the American taxpayers.

Throughout her life in public service, Senator MIKULSKI has lived by one guiding principle: to help our people meet the needs of today as she helps our Nation prepare for the challenges of tomorrow. It is an honor to congratulate Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI for her many years of service, and to wish her many more.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, it is heartwarming to see such a spontaneous outpouring of respect and appreciation for the distinguished Senator from Maryland, Ms. MIKULSKI. It is certainly well deserved.

She is one of the hardest working and most effective Senators serving in the Senate today. It has been a great pleasure working closely with her on the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to our dear friend and colleague, the senior Senator from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI. This week, Senator MIKULSKI became the longest-serving woman in the history of the United States Congress. That is quite a milestone and I want to congratulate her on her many years of devoted service to the people of her home State.

Senator MIKULSKI is a Maryland native. Descended from Polish immigrants, she was born and raised in Baltimore. She attended college at both St. Agnes College in Baltimore and the University of Maryland.

After several years of working as a social worker in the Baltimore area, Senator MIKULSKI began her political career in 1971 when she was elected to the Baltimore City Council. She served there for 5 years before running for Congress in 1976. For 10 years, she represented the Third Congressional District of Maryland. Then, in 1986, she was elected to serve here in the Senate.

Although the milestone we are recognizing today is a significant one, it is not the first for Senator MIKULSKI. Indeed, throughout her time in the Senate she has been a pioneer for women in public service.

For example, Senator MIKULSKI was the first woman elected to statewide office in Maryland. She was also the first Democratic woman elected to a Senate seat that was not previously held by her husband. And, she was the first woman to serve in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

I have known Senator MIKULSKI a long time, having served with her in the Senate for over 25 years now. While she and I have often found ourselves on opposite sides of many issues, I have long admired her commitment to her principles and, most importantly, her devotion to the people of her home State. Indeed, she has been a stalwart and often times fierce advocate for the interests of Marylanders.

I want to congratulate Senator MIKULSKI on this important milestone and I am grateful for this opportunity to pay tribute to her and to her many years of public service.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I greatly appreciate having this opportunity to join my colleagues in expressing our congratulations to BARBARA MIKULSKI as she reaches another great milestone in her career of service to the people of Maryland in the United States Congress.

Senator MIKULSKI is now the longest serving woman in the history of the United States Congress. Although outstanding in and of itself, it is an achievement that represents far more than the number of years she has served in the nation's Capitol. It is also a testament to her outstanding public service and her commitment to our future that has made it possible for her to help to make our great Nation both stronger and more secure.

Back home, Senator MIKULSKI's constituents have come to appreciate her more and more as they have seen how hard she works to represent them every day. That is why they always come out in such great numbers every election day to make sure she will continue to do so. They can see the difference she has made all around them and they appreciate the way she has made their cities and towns better places to live.

I have often heard Senator MIKULSKI referred to as the Dean of the Senate women, a title she has earned that was conferred upon her with the great admiration, affection and appreciation of those with whom she has served. Over the years so many of them have acknowledged the difference she has made in their lives with her support, her encouragement, her guidance and her direction. She has been such a great mentor to them because she has always led the best way—by example. It is another mark of distinction that has come to her as, each day, she has helped to write another chapter of the history of Maryland and this great Nation of ours.

Looking back, she has played an active role in a long list of changes that have come to our country over the years. Because she has been at the forefront of so many of them she has been a role model not only for those with whom she has served, but for those who have been watching her in action back home. I have no doubt, in the years to come, many more women will serve in the House and the Senate who will credit Senator MIKULSKI for first giving them the idea of serving in the Congress. Her own record of success then assured them that it would be possible for them to do the same if they were willing to work hard and take their case to the people for their consideration.

In the end, that is what our service in the Senate is all about—doing everything we can so that the current generation will have the tools they will need to succeed and then take their place as the next generation of our nation's leaders. Thanks to good people like BARBARA MIKULSKI the people back home know that someone cares. She has given them a voice and it is heard and heard clearly whenever she takes to the Senate floor to make their concerns known.

I have often heard it said that the meaning of public service is found in the definition of the word ''service.'' That is why we are taking a moment today to thank Senator MIKULSKI for putting her principles and her beliefs into action all these many years for her beloved Maryland and the United States of America. If I may paraphrase the words of Abraham Lincoln, it isn't so much her years of service that matters so much as the service of her years. Through the years she has made a difference in so many ways that will be long remembered and celebrated.

Congratulations, BARBARA. You are setting a record pace here in the Senate. From this day on, you will be setting a new record every day. Thank you for your service, but most of all, thank you for your friendship. Diana and I have appreciated having the chance to come to know you and to work with you.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today in tribute to Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI of Maryland, who has just become the longest serving woman in Congress, and to applaud the pioneering role that she has played in the evolution of the Senate.

Things have certainly changed since 1986, when Senator MIKULSKI was elected to the Senate. When Senator MIKULSKI joined the Senate as the first Democratic woman elected in her right as opposed to filling the term of a spouse, the Senate looked very different. There was only one other woman senator, Nancy Kassebaum, a Republican from Kansas. The Senate had just begun to televise their proceedings the year she was elected. And, obviously, there were no women in leadership positions in the Senate.

Senator MIKULSKI set out to change all that. She became the first woman in the Democratic leadership. She became the first woman to serve on the Appropriations Committee. And then she became the first woman to chair the Senate CJS Appropriations subcommittee.

And things certainly have changed. Now, in the 112th Congress, there are 17 women, both Republican and Democrat, in the Senate overall. There are seven women on the Appropriations Committee alone. Five women chair Senate committees. Women have had significant roles in both the Democratic and Republican Senate leadership.

While all of these changes were clearly not solely a function of Senator MIKULSKI's pioneering leadership, she blazed a trail as bright and as wide as anyone could possibly hope for. With her impassioned speeches, her plain spoken delivery, and her commitment to fairness and justice, Senator MIKULSKI could not be ignored or pigeonholed. She stood up for what she believed in, and she would not allow her voice to be silenced.

Senator MIKULSKI cared deeply about health care issues, and women's health in particular. When she learned that many Federally-funded research protocols did not include women, she led the fight to insure that would never happen again. She established the Office of Women's Health at NIH to ensure women would always have a voice in critical health issues.

One of her proudest accomplishments was working to pass the spousal impoverishment law, which changed the rules that forced elderly couples to spend all their assets and give up their home before the Government would help one member of the couple pay for a nursing home.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention Senator MIKULSKI's efforts on

behalf of her beloved State of Maryland. From the crabbers of the Chesapeake Bay to the steelworkers at Sparrows Point to the scientists at Goddard to all the other families all across the State, no one has worked harder to give them a voice on Capitol Hill than BARBARA MIKULSKI. On this historic day, I wish her the best, and I know that as long as she is a United States Senator, she will never stop fighting for what she believes is right.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, we mark March as Women's History Month, as a time of year for us to remember the valiant female leaders of our great Nation. One of them is very special to Montana. In 1916 Jeannette Rankin was the first woman elected to the United States Congress, 4 years before women were granted the right to vote.

As a member of the House of Representatives, her daring and vocal stance on controversial issues such as war and peace brought critical recognition from the press. In every situation, the strength of her values persisted, even under the pressures of unanimous opposition to a war with Germany. Jeannette Rankin said, ''I may be the first woman Member of Congress, but I won't be the last,'' and helped to pave the way for future generations of women leaders.

This past Saturday, March 17, 2012, marked a monumental day in American history. The Senator from Maryland, Ms. BARBARA MIKULSKI, celebrated her 35 year in the United States Congress.

That important accomplishment is a milestone for American culture and female leaders in Congress. Senator MIKULSKI is now the longest serving female in the Senate and in the history of the U.S. Congress. She spent her first 10 years in the House of Representatives, followed by the next 25 years here in the Senate. She has worked every day to make America a better place for the next generation.

When Senator MIKULSKI began her work in the House of Representatives, there were 18 female Members of the House and three female Members of the Senate. When she began her first term in the Senate, there were 23 female Members of the House and only one other female Member of the Senate. Now, she is a leader among our 17 female Senators and 76 female Members of the House of Representatives.

Her strong sense of community and instinctive nature pertaining to the needs of Americans is exemplified by her action-oriented attitude. Even before her tenure in Congress, as a social worker for the people of Maryland, Ms. MIKULSKI was active in local issues in and around the Baltimore area and worked to help at-risk children and seniors. She continues working passionately to address those issues throughout her tenure in Congress.

Her advocacy for justice and contributions to social issues are evident with her work to fight for women's rights and improved access to health care, to better education, and to volunteering and national service opportunities. She offers tremendous leadership for the Senate both as the chairwoman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging, and as the chairwoman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies.

Like Jeannette Rankin, Senator MIKULSKI has been a leader and an exemplar for strong and courageous women leaders in America.

Senator MIKULSKI gets things done, and I have enjoyed our friendship during our work together in the Senate. Her brave spirit is one that sets the bar for new and incoming Senators, both male and female. I congratulate Senator MIKULSKI on her special day and I look forward to continuing our work in the Senate together.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, first of all, let me say I am enormously touched and gratified by the warm words my colleagues have spoken on both sides of the aisle. I am particularly moved by the fact of the men of Maryland who are here today. I am moved by the wonderful words of Senator CARDIN, my colleague. I am moved as well that Governor O'Malley is here today.

When I came to the Senate, Senator Paul Sarbanes was my senior colleague, and he is here today as well. Governor O'Malley and Senator Sarbanes are on the bench, but these men are certainly not back-benchers. I must say about the Governor and Senator Sarbanes and Senator CARDIN, they prove the old adage that men of quality will always support good women who seek equality. I have enjoyed their support, their wise counsel, and their collegial efforts on behalf of the people of Maryland during my years in Maryland politics.

It is a great honor to be here today passing this significant benchmark of becoming the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress, both in the House where I served for 10 years, and in the Senate. It is a great honor for me to be able to pass into the history books along with such an esteemed person as Senator Margaret Chase Smith. We spoke about that in January 2011 when I was sworn in. There were tributes that day and wonderful words from our two women Senators from Maine. Today—actually over the weekend—I surpassed the record of Edith Norse Rogers who was the longest serving woman in the House. Both of those women came from New England. They were both hardy, resilient, and fiercely independent. I, as I have read their histories, so admired them. They were known for devotion to constituent service, an unabashed sense of patriotism, and kind of telling it like it is. I hope that as I join them in the history books, I can only continue with the same spirit of devotion to duty and that fierce independence and patriotism.

I didn't start out wanting to be a historic figure. To, ''What do you want to be when you grow up?'' you don't say, ''I want to be a historic figure.'' When I was growing up, it was about service. For me, it is not how long I serve, it is not about history. For me, history books were Jane Adams and Abigail Adams and powdered wigs. I just welcome a day when I have time to even powder my nose, let alone powder my wig. But the fact is, when I grew up, I wanted to be of service. I learned that in my home, in my family, in my community, and with the wonderful nuns who taught me.

Today my colleagues have spoken about my wonderful mother and father. I had a terrific mother and father. I am so happy my two sisters and my fantastic brothers-in-law are joining me today. I only wish my mother and father could be here with me because they worked so hard to see that my sisters and I had an education at significant sacrifice to them. But they were really wonderful people where others saw them in a life of business. Every day my father would open his grocery store and say, ''Good morning, can I help you?'' When he did, he wanted to assure that his customers got a fair deal.

My father opened his grocery store during the New Deal because he believed in Roosevelt and because, as my father said, ''Barb, I know Roosevelt believed in me.''

I also had the benefit of the wonderful Catholic nuns who educated me. I had the benefit of going to a school called the Institute of Notre Dame and then Mount St. Agnes College, the Sisters of Notre Dame and the Sisters of Mercy. These women, who concentrated their lives on the message of Christianity and the message of Jesus Christ, wanted to make sure that women in America could learn and be a part of our society. They didn't only teach us our three Rs, they taught us about leadership and service. But they also taught us about other values—the values of love your neighbor, care for the sick, worry about the poor, and be hungry and thirsty for justice.

When I was at the Institute of Notre Dame, a school that NANCY PELOSI went to as well, there was something called the Christopher movement after St. Christopher. The motto was, ''It is better to light one little candle than to curse the darkness.'' That is what I wanted to do. I wanted to be a social worker. I even thought about being a doctor. One time I even thought about being a Catholic nun, but that vow of obedience kind of slowed me down a little bit.

In this country wonderful things happen. When my great-grandmother came to this country, she had little money in her pocket but a big dream in her heart: that she could be part of the

American dream, that she could own a home in her own name, in her own right; that she could have a job and so could the people in her own family; and that based on merit and hard work you could be something. Well, in three generations, I have become a Senator. Only in America the story of my family could have occurred—modest beginnings, hard work, effort, neighbor helping neighbor.

Much has been said about my fight for the highway. I was thinking about getting a doctorate, a doctorate in public health at Johns Hopkins. But they were going to run that highway through the neighborhoods, the older ethnic neighborhoods, the African-American neighborhoods. We were viewed in some of those neighborhoods as the other side of the tracks. I wanted to fight to keep those neighborhoods on track. So I took on city hall, and I did fight them.

In this country, what happened? In another country, they would have taken a protester like me and put me in jail. Instead, in the United States of America, they sent me to the city council. I worked hard there, and 5 years later, when Senator Paul Sarbanes, who was a Congressman, ran for the Senate, I ran for his House seat, and I got the job.

When I arrived in the House in 1976, only 19 women were serving: 14 Democrats and 5 Republicans; only 5 women of color. In 2012, there are 74 women in the House: 50 Democrats, 24 Republicans; 26 women of color. In the Senate, there are now 17 women serving: 12 Democrats, 5 Republicans. Today, we saw visiting us Senator Carol Moseley-Braun, a woman of color who served well while she was here.

Those are the numbers and those are the statistics. And though I join this long number of firsts, for me it is not how long I have served but how well I have served. When I came to Congress, I became a Member for the fabulous Third Congressional District of Maryland. My job was to represent a blue-collar community that was in economic transition. What did we do? We were a community that built things here so we could ship them over there. We built cars. We built ships. We made steel. We knew if a country did not make something and build something, it could not make something of itself.

I fought for those blue-collar people. I fought to keep those jobs in manufacturing. We fought for the Port of Baltimore, its dredging, so we could bring in the big ships so we could have exports. We worked again for those people in those manufacturing areas while we saw jobs go overseas. Then we worked very hard for cities to make sure our cities were safe, that we had great schools, and that they had a chance of making it.

I fought hard for health care. One of my greatest pieces of legislation was the Spousal Anti-Impoverishment Act, so that if one spouse went into a nursing home, the other spouse would not have to spend down their life's savings and lose their home. AARP tells me my legislation of so many years ago, that stands today, has kept 1 million people—1 million people—from losing their home or their family farm.

Those were the battles then. Those were the battles when I changed my address and I came to the Senate. Although I changed my address, the battles are still the same: jobs, social justice, opportunity, based on hard work, peace in the world, and I continue to fight for this.

But for me, it is not only about issues. Issues are so abstract. Issues can be so bloodless when we talk about it. For me, issues are about people—the people I represent in my own hometown, the people I represent in my State, and the people who live in the United States of America.

My favorite thing is being out there talking to the people, going into diners, going table to table, listening to their stories, holding roundtables with parents whose children have special needs, meeting with scientists who have discoveries they think will lead to new ideas and new products that will bring new jobs, meeting with universities that train our workforce. For me, it is about the people.

So as I pass this important benchmark, which I am so honored to do, I want people to know I am still that young girl who watched her father open that grocery store every day and say: ''Good morning. Can I help you?'' I am still that young girl who went to the Institute of Notre Dame and Mount St. Agnes College who said: I am going to light one little candle. I do not want to curse the darkness. I want to continue to fight for a stronger economy, a safer America, the people of Maryland.

In conclusion, I want to say thanks. I am going to thank the Dear Lord for giving me the chance to be born in the greatest country in the world, to be able to work hard and serve in one of the greatest institutions in the United States of America. But nobody gets to be a ''me'' without a whole lot of ''thee.''

I thank my family. I thank the religious women who educated me. I thank all of my staff who have worked so hard to help me do a good job. And I thank the countless volunteers who believed in me and worked for my election when nobody else did. Most of all, I thank the people of the Third Congressional District and the State of Maryland for saying: BARB, we are going to give you your shot. Don't ever forget this. Don't ever forget us. I want them to know, though I have now served in the Senate 12,892 days, I will never forget them. Every morning I am saying in my heart: Good morning. Can I help you?

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I am so honored to join so many of my Senate colleagues and people from Maryland and across this country in recognizing and congratulating the amazing woman you just heard from, my good friend from Maryland Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, who, as you have just heard, has just become the longest serving female Member of Congress in the history of the United States.

This is an achievement that takes courage, it takes passion, and it takes commitment. Those are three attributes all of us who know her so well know she has in abundance. But my good friend, Senator MIKULSKI, has not just served long, she has served well.

The senior Senator from Maryland, over her 35 years in Congress, has established herself as a trailblazer, as a leader, and as a fighter for the people of her State. It is fitting that this milestone was reached during Women's History Month because Senator MIKULSKI has given so much of herself in support of other women in Congress. She has guided us, she has shown us how to stand and fight, and she has taken all of us under her wing.

Senator MIKULSKI realized when she arrived here that there was no rule book for women in Congress. So she took it upon herself to guide the way. She drew on her own experiences to make the transition easier for all of us.

She organized seminars that you have heard about. She taught us how to work together. She taught us about the legislative process, the rules on the floor, and the many more subtle rules off the floor.

In short, Senator MIKULSKI showed us the ropes, and she has done it every day I have been here for all the women who have come since she has been here. While she knows it is important and courageous to lead the charge, she also understands the first ones have to be responsible and successful so others can follow. It is because Senator MIKULSKI has done her job so well that other women have been able to follow in her footsteps.

She is here today as the longest serving woman in Congress, not by accident or by happenstance. She is here because she has earned it, because the people of her State know she is an indispensable champion of their causes, because she does work across party lines, and because she delivers results.

I know many years from now when women have achieved a larger, more representative role in our Nation's Capital, Senator MIKULSKI will be at the very top of the list of people to thank—the person who not only forged the path but who went back and guided so many of us down it.

I know many of my colleagues are on the floor today to thank Senator MIKULSKI. But I am here especially to thank her, as one of those women who have followed in her footsteps, for her more than 35 years of service to her State and to her country. Those of us who know her well know she is not even close to being finished.

So, Mr. President, my very best to my very good friend, Senator MIKULSKI. I wish her very well in her next 35 years.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President I too want to speak of my dear friend BARBARA MIKULSKI, who is just precious. She is precious to her family. She is precious to the people of the Third Congressional District that she represented for 10 years. She is precious to the people of Maryland, precious to the people of the United States, and precious to those of us who have the privilege of serving with her in this body.

She has been affectionately known as a few things: The dean of women; the breaker of the ceiling, as PATTY MURRAY just said; setting the stage, setting the rule book—writing the rule book—for women in the Senate.

There will be 51 women in the Senate 1 day—there will be—and it will come much more quickly because BARBARA MIKULSKI was the first. There is no question about that. The Senate will be a better place for it in so many different ways.

She is also not only known as the dean of women, we love her. She is known as BARB. I love calling her on the phone late at night and having her say: This is BARB. Please call me. Make sure you say the words and leave your phone number twice.

Of course, when BARB says something, we all do it. So I always leave the phone number twice.

I admire so much about her. But one of the things at the top of the list is who she is. She is the real deal. She knows where she came from. She has never forgotten where she came from. As I have told her personally, she has that internal gyroscope of who she is, what she should do, and how she should do it that guides her almost instinctively, and it is probably the most precious thing a politician can have. Not very many people have it, but hers is about the best I have ever witnessed.

It started from her upbringing and her faith, which she mentioned. We have talked about Willy. She has mentioned Willy. But you never forget how she reminds us because it is with her, and you can see it in her actions every day—how when people would come into the store that Willy had, the grocery store in east Baltimore, when they had lost their job or someone was very sick and Willy would say: Take the groceries and pay me later.

It reminded me of my grandfather Jake—we have talked about this—who was an exterminator, not quite the same as Willy and not providing the same services, but he would tell people: If you have roaches and rats in your house and you can't pay, I will still exterminate. Pay me when you have the money. So I understood that instinctively.

I would have loved Willy to have met my grandfather Jake because I am sure they were kindred souls in a lot of ways. And the guidance of Willy and BARB's mom—you can see it every day in the way she acts.

I just want to say another thing about BARB. She got into public service as a community activist. There was a highway that was going to tear up an important and historic part of her community, and she got involved. Being schooled by her and many of my colleagues, many women believed, oh, they would be excluded from politics if they went into politics directly. But when you are a community activist and you take a lead because something is bothering you about your home or your neighborhood, politics just followed sort of naturally. It is a little bit like PATTY MURRAY's story as well.

These days, because of what BARB has done, I think my daughters can aspire—I do not know if they do, but they can aspire to go into political life directly. In those days, it was much harder. But there she was. She led this fight. She went on to the city council, of course the Third Congressional District in Maryland, and now to this august Chamber. She has done so much. It has been cataloged by all my colleagues.

Medical research: There are probably millions of people alive today because of the 35 years she has pushed to make that happen. They do not know who they are, but they are there; and they are living happy and healthy because of BARB MIKULSKI.

How about veterans and health care needs? Again, literally tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands, of our veterans are living much better lives because they were able to get the health care that BARB MIKULSKI spearheaded, particularly in the earlier days when this was not a popular cause.

The list goes on and on and on. She has done so much. In our Chamber she is beloved. Beloved. People are sometimes afraid of her when she gets mad. People want her approval. But most of all, I think what most of us seek is her advice, because after so many years in politics, she has that gift to understand what the average person needs and to talk directly to them. She does not talk through her colleagues or does not talk through the media or does not talk through some community leader or other politician. She still is talking to that family sitting in east Baltimore or in Hagerstown or in Annapolis. She almost has them in front of her eyes wherever she goes. That is why her speeches are so effective. She does not try to polish them. That is not her. She speaks from the heart directly to the people, and she cares so much about them that it comes through. It is an amazing trait.

I most admire people in political life who never forget where they came from. She is one of the most powerful people, not just women, one of the most powerful persons in America. I did not know BARB MIKULSKI when she was a community activist in East Baltimore, but my guess is she is exactly the same today. All the power and the accomplishments and the emoluments and the praise, all deserved, have not changed her a whit. That to me says an amazing thing about an individual.

BARB, I know my colleagues are waiting, but we love you. We cherish you. And as PATTY MURRAY said, I will put it my own way, I am sure that BARBARA MIKULSKI, knowing her as well as I do, the best is yet to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I wish to join my colleagues in a tribute to Senator MIKULSKI.

I am delighted to join my colleagues in joining in this tribute to perhaps our favorite colleague, BARBARA MIKULSKI, on her becoming the longest serving woman in congressional history. Her work in these Halls has made our country stronger. In a place where partisan rancor too often rules the day, she has established a legacy of service to her constituents and to all of us in this body that stands as an example to every one of us.

Her political career began in the late 1960s when she launched a campaign to stop the construction of a highway over a historic neighborhood she wanted to protect in Baltimore. She won that battle and went on to run for the Baltimore City Council in 1971. More than 40 years later and following a successful stint in the House of Representatives, BARBARA MIKULSKI continues to blaze an impressive trail.

During her 27 years in the Senate, she became the first woman to sit on the Senate Appropriations Committee, the first woman to chair an appropriations subcommittee, and the first Democratic woman elected to Senate leadership. Last year, we celebrated BARBARA as she became the longest serving female Senator. Now she has crossed yet another milestone, passing Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts, having served in the Congress longer than any woman in history.

Of course, we do not just celebrate the quantity of BARBARA's service but its quality. No one is better at drilling down to the heart of an issue and expressing it in punchy, unforgettable terms. No one cheers us up more than BARBARA when she tells us to: Stand tall, square our shoulders, put on our lipstick, and rise to the occasion. We do not all put on lipstick, but we all get the message.

No one better combines the idealism of politics with the proactive abilities of government. She told me once with a twinkle in her eye, ''I am a reformer, but I am a bit of a wardheeler too.'' Practicality and passion combined is what makes politics successful, and no one does it better than BARBARA.

When she was first elected to the House in 1977, she was 1 of 21 women in Congress; 18 in the House and only 3 in the Senate. Today there are 93 women

serving including 17 Senators. BARBARA has earned the distinction of dean of the Senate women. But she never, never forgot her roots as a champion for those who need a voice in this building.

In her years in the Senate, BARBARA MIKULSKI's dedication to her constituents and women's rights has been clear, from becoming a champion of women's health issues to organizing training seminars for women of both parties elected to the Senate, to sponsoring and pushing through with a force that we all remember the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009.

During my much shorter tenure as a Senator, I have had the great privilege and pleasure to work with BARBARA to pass landmark health care reform legislation out of the HELP Committee. I have also served with her on the Intelligence Committee, and worked closely with her on the Senate Intelligence Committee's cyber task force to evaluate cyber threats and issue recommendations to the full committee. I have taken from those experiences great affection and respect for Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI. These are issues that are complex, complicated, difficult, and abstruse, and she brought to them the verve and the vigor and the vision to move on them. And those really are her hallmarks: verve, vigor, and vision.

I know all of us here in this Chamber are proud to call Senator BARB our colleague and friend as she makes history yet again. Her hard work and collegial spirit have enriched this Senate. I wish her all of the best in the accomplishments ahead. On behalf of all Rhode Islanders, Senator MIKULSKI, I congratulate you for this milestone in your history, the Senate's history, and our Nation's history.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I consider it an honor and a privilege to rise for a moment to pay tribute to Senator MIKULSKI from the State of Maryland, And in so doing, I think it is only appropriate that I quote from a speech made on November 22 in 1922 by the first woman ever to serve in the Senate.

Rebecca Latimer Felton was the first woman Senator. She was appointed for 1 day. Governor Brown had run against Walter George for the Senate. Walter George won. And because of Ms. Felton's unending help to him in his race, he asked the Governor if he would appoint her for a day to his seat before he took it and was sworn in.

She came to Washington, DC, to serve for 1 day and she made one speech. In that speech she had a paragraph that to me exemplifies BARBARA MIKULSKI. She said, ''Let me say, Mr. President, that when the women of the country come and sit with you, though there may be but very few in the next few years, I pledge you that you will get ability, you will get integrity of purpose, you will get exalted patriotism, and you will get unstinted usefulness.''

That was Rebecca Felton in 1922. Today, in March of 2012, we honor a Senator who has lived up to every one of those promises Ms. Felton made almost 100 years ago. I have had the privilege to serve on the HELP Committee with the Senator, worked very closely on the Alzheimer's legislation which she has been such a leader on, worked with her on many other projects, including one I am happy to remind her about, and that was the confirmation of Wendy Sherman a few months ago when together on the floor of the Senate, we worked together to see that she was appointed and named and confirmed Under Secretary of State for the United States of America, serving under Hillary Clinton.

On that night when we worked on getting that UC done, and it was not easy, I saw the tenacity, I saw the grace, I saw the patriotism, and I saw the integrity of BARBARA MIKULSKI. It is an honor for me to rise today and commend her on a great individual achievement, not just for herself but for all of the women who have gone before her and all the women who will come later on, and to my five granddaughters and my daughter.

She has led the life in the Senate exemplary of the contributions that all women can make to our society. I commend her on her service, her compassion, her integrity, and all that she has done for the State of Maryland, the United States of America, and peace on this Earth.

BARBARA, congratulations to you on a great achievement. It is an honor for me to be here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I am honored to follow my good friend and colleague from the State of Georgia in recognizing the remarkable contributions of Senator MIKULSKI, now the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress.

Today we have been joined by many great Marylanders. We have had Governor O'Malley and Senator CARDIN, and former Senator Sarbanes, and Senator MIKULSKI's own family, her sisters and brother-in-law in attendance. I am also pleased that we have got two of her favorite constituents, my father and my brother, who are with us today as well. They live in Annapolis and they have known what I have known since childhood when I lived in the suburbs of Baltimore, that Senator MIKULSKI is a remarkable, a tireless, a passionate, and an effective Senator.

Reference has been made to her start as a community organizer, someone who saved Fells Point from a 16-lane superhighway, someone who was not afraid to get into the gritty issues of a local community and standing up for folks who did not have anyone to fight for them. We have also heard about her early years as a social worker, helping folks in need understand the programs available to them and then fighting for the programs that should have been available to them.

It is no surprise to any of us that the district she first represented in the House of Representatives, the Third, was known as the ''steel district'' where lots of men and women worked in the Bethlehem Steel plant. It is no surprise that she has earned a reputation here in the Senate as a woman of steel, who fights for manufacturers, who fights for Federal workers, who fights for Western Maryland, who fights for poultry on the peninsula of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, who fights for her constituents day in and day out.

It is indeed just that in this Woman's History Month we would be recognizing Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, who has stood up for Maryland each and every day. And though like me she comes up a little short every time she stands, she stands incredibly tall in the company of Senators throughout American history. She is someone who is passionate for people, who has determination to continue in the tradition of her father, that fair deal grocer, who asked every day that simple question: How can I help, and then gets busy answering it.

She is a role model for me, for all of us, for my daughter, for my family, for our community. She is the only Senator I have heard say to me, fiercely, before going on a vote on the floor: To the barricades. And she is the only person who could say that and mean it. For a lifetime, she has been at the barricades of justice. She has been at the barricades of service. She has been at the barricades of making a difference. And for that, we are all grateful.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I too stand today to pay recognition to a friend, a colleague, and truly a woman who brings a smile to my face. Because for as many years as she has served her State of Maryland, for as many years as she has served in the Halls of Congress, she has the enthusiasm, the spontaneity, the excitement when she approaches an issue as a brand new rookie freshman coming into this body.

That is quite remarkable because around here we can get kind of dragged down by the day-to-day politics, the partisan nature, and the conflicts that are inherent in this process.

BARBARA MIKULSKI is one who embraces life and the responsibilities that are put before her. She has an opportunity to represent her constituents, and she embraces it with an enthusiasm that should be a reminder to us all of why we are here to serve.

I have so many different stories and quips and quotes about Senator MIKULSKI, whose name sounds somewhat similar to mine—MURKOWSKI. Every

now and again, we have an opportunity to share the same stage, the same podium, and the individual who is introducing us will trip on his or her tongue and refer to us wrongly. There was one occasion where we were being recognized by the National Geographic Society, and she pointed out to the individual making the introduction: She is the vertical one, and I am the not so vertical one.

This is just a recognition again that regardless of the situation, BARBARA MIKULSKI has a good comeback, a quick quip. She is a quipmeister if there ever was one. It speaks again to the enthusiasm and passion she brings to the job she has in front of her.

With names such as MURKOWSKI and MIKULSKI, we clearly have a Polish heritage we look to with pride. She reminds me of mine because she is perhaps a little more connected to those Polish roots. Again, there is a sense of pride with whom she is, where she has come from, and what her family has done preceding her that allows her to go on and do so much for so many.

We have had the opportunity to work together on issues that, coming from different parts of the country—truly different ends of the country—and one would not think we would have as much commonality on some of the issues. As the chairmen on the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee, we have worked closely on issues that relate to our fisheries, coastal issues, and judiciary issues. She is always reminding me that we have to take care of our fishermen out there and make sure our families who rely on our waters are appropriately cared for.

We have worked together on women's health issues. We were recently at the Sister to Sister event. I do feel a kinship and a relationship with this Polish sister as we talk about those issues that are so important to women's health.

We share the same concerns about how we do more for our first responders, our servicemembers, and our veterans. Just this past week, as Senator—I almost called her MURKOWSKI myself—Senator MIKULSKI was chairing a committee, and I brought up an issue as it related to the late Senator Ted Stevens and the Department of Justice investigation that failed so miserably—and we are now pursuing it, through different avenues, to make sure nobody should have to go through what Senator Stevens did—Senator MIKULSKI literally stopped the committee hearing to remind the Attorney General that, in fact, this was not a partisan issue; this was an issue where we all should be concerned and that if there is no justice within the Department of Justice, what does that mean for us as a nation.

She is never hesitant to speak and stand and make very clear, when these issues are important to the Nation, it should know no bounds by party. BARBARA MIKULSKI has held true to that.

In many different ways, that makes this milestone we are recognizing even more important because I think there is a kind of a piling on of events that can happen in the Halls of Congress, where the weight of what we do on a daily basis gets to be a load. To a certain extent, one can get tired, one can get worn, but BARBARA has not let the weight of that responsibility bring her down.

I was joking with her a little bit ago when all the accolades were coming her way. I said: BARBARA, with all these kind words that are being said about you, by the time the tributes are done, you are going to be 7 feet tall. That woman is 7 feet tall in the minds of so many of us. She is a giant for the people of Maryland. She has proven herself to be a giant in so many ways as she works to do good for so many.

I am proud to stand with so many colleagues in recognizing her tenure, recognizing this historic place she has carved for herself within the Congress, and to call her my friend.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I rise to honor the service of one of our most distinguished and long-serving colleagues, the tireless, sometimes relentless, and often spirited senior Senator from Maryland, Ms. BARBARA MIKULSKI.

To say she is a trailblazer for women in politics is an understatement. She has blazed a bold trial not just for women in politics but for all women in every endeavor. She is a fighter, an advocate, someone whom one is hopefully on the same side with because she is a formidable opponent when one is on the opposite side. She is a role model for leadership and getting things done.

Her impressive list of accomplishments is far too long to recite in a few minutes or even a few hours. It would not adequately do justice to her incredible service to Maryland and the people of this Nation. Senator MIKULSKI has dedicated her career to serving Marylanders and has dedicated her life to public service.

She began as a social worker in the neighborhoods of Baltimore, working every day on the street helping at-risk children find their way and giving seniors the help they needed.

She was not, and is not, a bleeding heart, but there is no one who has a fuller heart, a more open heart to the deepest needs of the least powerful among us than Senator MIKULSKI. She is someone one wants on their side.

Senator MIKULSKI came to public service with what I like to call the long view. She can see beyond herself to the needs of society as a whole, and she has fought for those needs and won on far more occasions than she has lost.

When she first ran for public office in 1971, I know she had in her heart the deep and abiding memories of those kids and seniors she met in Baltimore when she began her career. I know she carries those memories with her to this day. To this day, she has never forgotten the people of Maryland who need her the most and have had the wisdom to elect her time and time again.

Her political career has taken her from the Baltimore City Council to the House of Representatives and to this Chamber, where she has honorably served for the past 26 years. For 7 years, I have had the opportunity to work with her in this Chamber, and there has been no stronger, more knowledgeable, more committed colleague on this side of the aisle. She is an example for all her colleagues, determined to work across the aisle when possible and ready to fight for her beliefs when necessary.

She was the first woman elected to statewide office in Maryland, the first Democratic woman elected to the Senate in her own right, the first woman to serve in both Houses of Congress, and the longest serving female Member of the Senate.

As we all know, this past Saturday, Senator MIKULSKI became the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress, serving more than 35 years in the House of Representatives and the Senate.

It is only fitting that she achieve this milestone during Women's History Month because she has not only paved the way for women in politics but she has helped pave the way for women everywhere.

I had the opportunity to work with Senator MIKULSKI during the long and difficult debate and negotiations on health care reform. Her work was instrumental in ensuring that women have access to the comprehensive health care they are now guaranteed under the law. During that debate, no one's voice was clearer, no one's voice was stronger, no one was more convincing than she in the fight for a woman's right to comprehensive health care coverage.

She fought for mandatory insurance coverage of essential services, such as mammograms and maternity care, services that many insurance companies refused to cover. She fought to end gender discrimination by insurance companies.

As a result of the affordable care act and, in large measure because of Senator MIKULSKI's tireless efforts on behalf of women, being a woman is no longer a preexisting condition, as insurance companies used to say, that can be discriminated against.

Those insurance companies that routinely denied coverage of basic women's health services—essential services—are now required to cover those services under the comprehensive women's health services provision of the law.

Whenever there is a need in the Chamber for a strong voice for women, whenever there is a need for an advocate to stand for the powerless against the powerful, whenever there is a child who needs a friend or a senior citizen

who needs a hand, BARBARA MIKULSKI is there.

I believe there are many times she comes to this floor remembering, as she said, her days back in Baltimore, and she is right there—an advocate's advocate—fighting for those children and seniors she met along the way.

The rest of us are better off because she comes here with a full heart, ready to do what is right, not just what is politically expedient.

Her bill, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, was signed into law by President Obama just days after his inauguration. I was proud to work with her on that bill and on so many other efforts as well that make a difference in the lives of average Americans.

Finally, Senator MIKULSKI has been a tireless advocate for something that is near and dear to my own heart—for those who suffer from Alzheimer's and their families.

As the son of a mother who battled Alzheimer's for 18 years and lost her life to it, I understand firsthand the unique challenges of providing long-term care for a loved one. Senator MIKULSKI has come to this floor on countless occasions advocating for increased research, education, and programs for individuals with Alzheimer's. She has found support from her colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

It is estimated that 5.4 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's and millions more have been touched in some way by this debilitating disease.

I thank the Senator from the bottom of my heart for her passion for helping those who suffer from this disease. I look forward to continuing to work with her on this issue until we find a cure for Alzheimer's.

The bottom line: BARBARA MIKULSKI is a deeply committed public servant. The State of Maryland has rightly recognized her invaluable service for many years. Because of her efforts, those Maryland families know their interests are protected and their voices are heard.

It has been an honor to serve with her. All of us in this Chamber can only hope to serve our States with the same conviction, selflessness, and pride as Senator MIKULSKI has throughout her 35 years of service to the State of Maryland.

I am reminded of what Mother Teresa said when she got the Congressional Gold Medal:

> It is not the awards and recognition that one receives in life that matters; it is how one has lived their life that matters.

In that respect, BARBARA MIKULSKI has lived an extraordinary life. We thank her for what she has done and not just for the people of Maryland but for all the people of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I am proud to be able to join my colleagues on the floor this afternoon in honoring Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI for her service to Maryland and for the endless contributions she has made to the people of this country.

It is very hard to adequately describe a political icon such as BARBARA MIKULSKI. For all of us women in politics, she is a model of what we can aspire to or what we would hope to aspire to. I just want to tell a simple story about BARB that I think reflects her ability to get along with people, her zest for life, as so many of my colleagues have described, and the connection she makes that makes a difference for people.

She and I were on a flight with four other Senators to the security forum in Halifax, Nova Scotia, a couple of years ago, and the weather was bad, so our flight was diverted to Bangor, ME. It was winter in New England, and of course, when there is bad weather in New England in the winter, it sticks around for a while, so we were trapped overnight in Bangor. Most of us just sort of sat there waiting to figure out what was going to be done while we waited for a flight the next day, but not BARBARA because she doesn't sit still. She is never afraid to pick up the phone and take action, and that is exactly what she did. BARBARA dialed up her old friend and colleague—the colleague of all of us—Senator SUSAN COLLINS, and said: Guess where I am. And that is how those of us who were on that flight—the six Senators and the Secretary of Homeland Security—wound up joining Senator COLLINS and the legendary Troop Greeters of Bangor, ME, in welcoming troops at the airport as they returned home from overseas. So what had earlier seemed like an inconvenience turned into a fabulous opportunity to thank our brave men and women in uniform and to have a good time while we were doing it.

You find those kinds of things happening if you spend time with BARBARA MIKULSKI. It is a byproduct of her relentless energy, her drive to better her community and our Nation as a whole, her deep commitment to fighting for women's health, and her unfailing grace and gumption as a legislator, a colleague, and a friend.

As has been said, she got her start as a social worker trying to make the lives of men and women in her native Baltimore a little easier to bear. She was working in the service of values that were taught to her by her family, who owned the neighborhood grocery store. And as so many have commented, she often tells the story of her father opening the store early so that steelworkers coming in for the early-morning shift would have time to buy their lunch. BARB has carried that spirit, those values she learned from her family in that grocery store here to the Senate, and often those values are sorely needed here.

As dean of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, she has built a sense of community within the caucus. Her bipartisan women's dinners are legendary. And, of course, what happens at those dinners stays at those dinners. Those are MIKULSKI's rules. But we really don't need to look any further than that wintry night in Maine to know how effective she has been in making things happen for people.

I look forward to more of her dinners, to more conversations with the Senator, to more chances to work with her as she fights on behalf of women and seniors and veterans and all those who don't have a voice in government and at the table. I thank the Senator for her friendship, for her leadership, and for her many years of service.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I too am honored to be able to rise today to speak of our dear friend BARBARA MIKULSKI. So many good things have been said, so many accolades have been shared about what BARBARA has done and what she means to all of us. I can only tell you there is not a better ally, mentor, neighbor, and, most important, friend to have in the Senate than BARBARA MIKULSKI.

My State shares a border with BARBARA's State. Maryland and West Virginia have had a long and illustrious relationship. As Governor, I had always known of BARBARA and had met her a few times when I served the great State of West Virginia. But as a Senator, I have had the privilege of being her colleague and working with her and becoming friends, listening to her and watching her in how she works with her constituents, how she considers the issues, how she fights for issues. I don't think anyone has ever had to guess where BARBARA stands on an issue because we all know.

In the 15 months we have worked together, I can say it has been extremely rewarding to serve alongside her, whether it is her wisdom she shares on the train ride over to our sessions here or whether we talk about our both being raised in a grocery store. My grandfather had a little grocery store and, as you know, BARBARA was raised with her father in a grocery store. I think, basically, if you have retail in your blood, you understand the people of America.

Her sense of humor is something to behold. Every day I have the privilege of serving with her is a good day in the Senate.

I know colleagues have all shared their stories about BARBARA, and they have had more experience with her in the Senate. As a freshman, being here only a little over a year and a half, I have not had that many personal experiences, but I can tell you this: If there is a fight that breaks out, if there is something going wrong, you want BARBARA on your side. She is the person to have in that foxhole when the shooting starts. And I have been so appreciative to have her as my friend and always counting on her.

As we have all heard, she has been an advocate for women's health, the space program, and her most beloved State of Maryland, which she fights for every day.

Last year she became the first woman to reach the milestone of serving a quarter of a century in the Senate. Madam President, I have staffers who are younger than her years of service. But I also have young staffers, especially my female staffers, who have said they see a world of possibility because of the trail Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI has left for them. With all of that, she has blazed a trail for all of us. No one will be able to fill the shoes of BARBARA MIKULSKI. We will all be lucky enough to follow in her footsteps.

When she began serving on the Hill in 1977, there were 20 other women in all of Congress. She and 17 others served in the House, while there were 3 in the Senate. Today, 35 years later, there are 17 women serving in the Senate. If there is anything we can learn from Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, it is that 17 women is far too few. We need more women like you, BARBARA, and, just as important, we need more Senators like you.

I can honestly say that I know the State of Maryland is much better off because of BARBARA MIKULSKI, but I can tell you that the United States of America is a better country because of BARBARA MIKULSKI. So I say thank you to my dear friend BARBARA for her service to this great country and to all the constituents in Maryland who must be extremely proud of her and have a right to be so. I too am so proud to call her my friend and my neighbor.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Madam President, we have listened with interest and total accord as the life of BARBARA MIKULSKI in the Senate has been reviewed by so many people. We have heard the friendship and good will we all share toward her.

Her record is quite well known. She is determined to get things done. She never lets minutia stand in the way or block an accomplishment. And I have noticed one thing: When BARBARA MIKULSKI starts to talk during a debate, the noise around the room quiets down. And if it doesn't, beware; BARBARA will call your attention to it and say it in a way that demands attention.

BARBARA and I arrived in the Senate in fairly close proximity. I came here in 1983 and BARBARA arrived in 1986, as I recall. We were both on the Appropriations Committee. I had some slight seniority over her, and one of the things that were being dealt with was seniority. BARBARA asked for my help in the choice of subcommittee, and I tried to step out of the way and help BARBARA obtain the chairmanship of a subcommittee in Appropriations, which she managed so well and so effectively. She once called me her Galahad, and I was proud of the moniker because it was intended to be a compliment and a sign of friendship.

Strikingly, BARBARA MIKULSKI and I have backgrounds that are not dissimilar. I came from Polish heritage. My grandparents on my paternal side were born in Poland, as BARBARA's family was. They were immigrants. My parents were brought as children from Europe and went through the traditional immigrant absorption.

My folks found it very hard to make a living as they grew up here in America. My grandparents were essentially poor people with a kind of blue-collar background. They had to resort to storekeeping to keep food on the table, a roof overhead, and clothes on their backs.

The one thing that threaded through those years for me—and I heard it coming from BARBARA MIKULSKI so many times when she spoke—was there was always dignity in the house, there was always a positive outlook.

As I heard, my parents, like hers, were not able to do much with presents and valuables. But they did something else, and you see it so fundamentally clear in BARBARA MIKULSKI's demeanor and her behavior: that what she learned at home, the same thing that I learned at home, was the meaning of values not valuables but values. And values included a character obligation for hard work and honesty and decency. They were the yardsticks by which we were measured as children and as adults.

I worked very closely with BARBARA. I left the Senate, as is known, for 2 years and my seniority slipped as a consequence. BARBARA's seniority continued to grow, and she is chairman of the appropriations subcommittee. BARBARA always brought a degree of strength and energy to the things that she said and to the things she did. Although BARBARA during a presentation wanted to make sure that she was heard, and heard correctly, she would also pop up with humor. She had a facility with words and a facility with expression that would have you engrossed in what she was saying and caught off guard when a joke or a humorous statement would pop up.

When we note that BARBARA MIKULSKI, from this modest background, was always on the side of working people, it was never a mask; it was the truth and it was where she wanted to be. I must say that she, for me, was always a steadfast beacon that would remind us: Don't get carried away too much with your personal importance. Get carried away with the things you have to do in your responsibility as a Senator.

When BARBARA MIKULSKI came these years ago, as was noted, she was the first among the women to come to the Senate and ultimately, as we now know, became the longest serving and carried herself through all of the difficulties we have had. But always, always you could depend on BARBARA MIKULSKI. When BARBARA stood up, people stopped talking about things that were extraneous and they would listen carefully, because BARBARA MIKULSKI always made so much sense and she didn't let you get by without a challenge if she believed you were wrong.

We have heard about her record, we have heard about her accomplishments, and everybody had wonderful things to say about her. I listened carefully to the statements that were being made and thought about our days together and how wonderful it was to be able to hear BARBARA MIKULSKI make sense out of what often escaped that challenge. She would offer the challenge and she would offer solutions.

I, like our other colleagues, stand here in awe and respect and note that BARBARA MIKULSKI, the storekeeper's daughter, is so much like that which I saw in my own life and we have seen in America in the past century; and BARBARA MIKULSKI who, in all due modesty, without any impression of a smug satisfaction, is always ready to take up the battle for the people she served, not only in the State of Maryland but across the country. She is an inspiration for women coming to government, and she serves so well as a demonstration of what could be.

I am delighted to be here, to stand here as a friend and an admirer of BARBARA MIKULSKI, and wish her many more years of service. I know that with BARBARA around, you can always count on sense and good judgment to result.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York is recognized.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I associate myself with the remarks of my colleague, the Senator from New Jersey.

It is with great admiration that I rise today to join all of my colleagues who have spoken before me and who will continue to speak honoring the Senator from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI, as the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress.

It has been such an honor to serve with Senator MIKULSKI. In my 3 years in the Senate, she has quickly become a dear friend and an invaluable mentor, as she has been for all of the other female colleagues as the dean of women Senators.

It wasn't until 1932 that Hattie Caraway became the first woman ever elected to the Senate, and it wasn't until a half century later in 1986 that, against all odds, BARBARA MIKULSKI became the first Democratic woman elected to the Senate. That is right. When she arrived in the Senate, she was just one of two women serving in this body. Now the longest serving woman in congressional history, Senator MIKULSKI is showing what is possible when you ignore conventional wisdom, never stop fighting for what is right, and honor our commitment to families who elect us every single day.

One of her hallmark battles has been the fight for equal pay for work for women. This is not only an issue of

equality and justice but an economic imperative, because as we stand here today, with more dual income households than ever, women only make 78 cents on the dollar compared to men. For women of color, the disparity is even greater, African-American women earning 62 cents on the dollar, and Latinas 53 cents on the dollar. I know Senator MIKULSKI won't give up until we correct this outrageous injustice, and I am honored to be fighting alongside her.

Senator MIKULSKI has also led the fight to strengthen our laws against domestic violence, and open access to health screenings and treatment that saves women's lives. Close to my heart, she was among the first to stand up to insurance companies that said that being a woman was a preexisting condition. You can always count on Senator MIKULSKI to lead the charge in drawing a line in the sand in the Senate when it comes to protecting women's health and women's right to choose. We saw it yet again when she stood up to the dangerous overreach of the Blunt amendment that would have denied women of this country the ability to choose which medications to take and leave that decision to their boss.

She embodies the words of Eleanor Roosevelt:

> The battle for individual rights of women is one of long standing and none of us should countenance anything that undermines it.

It is that spirit—making your voice heard, never backing down in the face of injustice—that has made Senator MIKULSKI one of the strongest voices we have for women in this country and women around the world. Every single day she is paving the way for more women leaders in America by showing the young women and girls of this country that women's voices matter and are needed in our public debate.

I close by expressing my personal debt of gratitude to her for her vision, her leadership, and her pioneering spirit. I simply could not imagine working in this body without her leadership. She has taught me so much in such a short period of time. And, as importantly, she has fostered an unbreakable bipartisan spirit among our colleagues that has resulted in important victories for the American public.

Thank you, Senator MIKULSKI, and congratulations on your historic achievement. It is an honor to serve with you, and I hope to continue to serve with you for many years to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Both Senator SESSIONS and Senator SNOWE are here, and I don't know if they wanted to speak. I know we have had a flow of speakers on this side, and if one of you wants to speak before I speak, I think it is the fair thing to do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, my understanding was that Senator DURBIN is going to make a UC request, which I plan to object to, and there might be some brief discussion of that. But I don't see Senator DURBIN on the floor.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I am probably going to be the concluding remarks on celebrating Senator MIKULSKI, so I am going to proceed with that.

Madam President, we have been here now for almost 3 hours—I was down here when we started. Senator FEINSTEIN started about 2:00 and we are approaching 5:00 now—for an incredible celebration of BARBARA MIKULSKI's career. I have listened to a lot of it both at my office and here on the floor, and it is pretty remarkable to hear the kinds of things she has done with her life and I rise today to honor my colleague, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI.

As has been noted, this month Senator MIKULSKI becomes the longest serving woman in the history of Congress. With her perfect sense of timing, BARBARA reaches this historic milestone during Women's History Month. And it is for the history books. But, as BARBARA has said: It is is not how long I serve but how well I serve. And she has served very well. She has served her beloved State of Maryland very well, and she served this country in a number of capacities on the Appropriations Committee and on various committees in the Congress.

We celebrate this historic occasion but, more deeply, we celebrate BARBARA's record of achievement—a record that transcends gender, a record that is rooted in a life dedicated to public service.

Since she was first elected to public office in 1971 to the Baltimore City Council, BARBARA has been setting milestones. Think about that for a minute—1971. This is 40 years plus of public service. As the Chair knows, this is pretty remarkable. She served in public service for a while. I have served for a while. But 41 years of public service is remarkable—the first woman elected to statewide office in Maryland; the first Democratic woman elected to the Senate in her own right; the first woman in the Senate Democratic leadership; and the first Democratic woman to serve in both Houses of Congress. Yet it is not her being first that is the most impressive; it is her commitment to putting others first. BARBARA has shown that commitment time and again.

In over 35 years in the Congress, she has never wavered in her service to our Nation and her dedication to the people of Maryland. She has fought for quality education. She has fought for American seniors. She has fought for women's health and for veterans. For women facing unequal pay, BARBARA championed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. For senior citizens facing bankruptcy because of a spouse's nursing home care, BARBARA wrote the Spousal Anti-Impoverishment Act. Yes, she is a trailblazer, but she blazes those trails to help others—for young people who dream of going to college, for families facing devastating illness, for opportunity for all Americans. That has been her passion, that has been her true achievement, and that will be her greatest legacy.

When BARBARA was first elected to the Senate in 1986, there was only one other female Senator. Now there are 17. BARBARA is, rightly so, the dean of the women. She is a mentor to her female colleagues, but no less so she is an inspiration to all of us.

I admire BARBARA's remarkable determination and her tenacity, but also her ability to work with others to get things done. She will fight for what she believes, but she will sit down to dinner with her colleagues across the aisle. And she has never forgotten where she came from. The daughter of a Baltimore grocer, each night she returns home to Baltimore. She has never forgotten the values she learned there: hard work, helping one's neighbor, patriotism.

She is diminutive in height only. That was evident early on. The story is well known how, as a young community activist, BARBARA stopped that 16-lane highway from coming through Baltimore's Fells Point neighborhood. She is not afraid to stand up to power, and she is not afraid of speaking strongly to power. In all the ways that count, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI is a towering figure.

Albert Schweitzer once said: I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know for sure. The only ones among you who will be truly happy are those who have sought and found how to serve. This BARBARA MIKULSKI has done. From her early days as a social worker to her years in Congress, she has served. She has served long and well.

Congratulations, BARBARA. It is an honor to be your colleague.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I couldn't be more pleased as well as privileged to join all of my colleagues today in congratulating a very good friend and colleague, the dean of the women of the Senate, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, on overtaking Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers as longest serving woman in the history of the Congress.

As someone who has had the privilege of knowing Senator MIKULSKI since 1978 when I was first elected to the House of Representatives, for me, this milestone represents a watershed moment in the life of American politics.

For nearly 35 years, I have witnessed BARBARA MIKULSKI summon and harness a seemingly limitless reservoir of energy as a fierce advocate and a champion on behalf of the people of Maryland as well as the country. With equal parts vigor and vigilance, she has demonstrated a devotion to her constituents that has been unerring in its promise and ironclad in its purpose.

It is precisely that caliber of service that the people of Maryland have rewarded time and time again.

As I stated on this very floor at the outset of this Congress when she surpassed the length of service of Maine's legendary Senator Margaret Chase Smith, Senator MIKULSKI is synonymous with ''the special bond of trust which should exist between the governing and the governed.'' She has ''recognized injustice and acted boldly to quell it . . . giving a voice to the voiceless . . . power to the powerless.''

What Senator Margaret Chase Smith and Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers exemplified as standard bearers in the last century for length of service, Senator MIKULSKI embodies in this century—that the commitment to advancing the common good is bound neither by geographic region nor political affiliation but, rather, by an undaunted desire to serve others.

A consummate role model and admired mentor, Senator MIKULSKI always stands as a shining example that the robust pursuit of policy and the willingness to hear and consider dissenting views are not mutually exclusive. As I have often said, Senator MIKULSKI knows only one speed, and that is full speed ahead. But by the same token, she only knows one way to govern—through what she aptly referred to as the zone of civility. That approach, so integral to making this institution work, is indisputably one of the hallmark measures of Senator MIKULSKI's longstanding success in public life. Indeed, it is the blueprint for interaction that she has imbued in all of us who are women serving in the Senate. She has worked to establish a tone of respect that infuses our conversations, our collegiality, our collaboration. It is a personal cause to Senator MIKULSKI that is exemplified by the monthly dinners for women Senators that she initiated along with the Senator from Texas Mrs. HUTCHISON, a tradition that has become a catalyst for camaraderie and central to what Senator MIKULSKI calls our ''unbreakable bond.''

There has been no greater friend for women who have come to serve in the Senate, and I am sure it is a result of Senator MIKULSKI having arrived here as the second woman to serve in the Senate, along with the Senator from Kansas, Senator Kassebaum, as she said at the time—and that is why she was so willing to serve as a mentor for other women who arrived in the Senate, because she was only one of two women who were serving in this institution. As she said, the Senate had a long tradition of every man for himself. She was determined, she said, that it would not be every woman for herself while she was in the Senate.

As my colleagues also well know, when it comes to having an ally in the legislative foxhole, there is none more feisty, none more formidable, and certainly none better than Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI. I have witnessed her tenacity firsthand, having worked with her side by side over the decades, whether on matters of equity for women in the workplace, ensuring gender-integrated training in the military, working on cybersecurity, working on every other issue where we are bringing justice to those who have borne the brunt of injustice.

Nowhere has her leadership been more unmistakable, of course, or more monumental than in the area of women's health. I well recall, when I arrived in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1979, I joined what was then known as the Congresswomen's Caucus on Women's Issues, which is where I ultimately became the cochair for a better part of the decade. Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, at that time being in the House of Representatives, served in that caucus as well.

When I arrived in the House of Representatives in 1979, there were only 16 women serving in that institution. That is why the congresswomen's caucus was formed, to focus on those issues that mattered to women and to family and to children. We recognized that it was our obligation and responsibility to work, to focus on those issues because otherwise they would languish on the back burner rather than being on the front burner. We also understood that if we did not focus on these issues, if we did not advance these issues, no one else would. So we began to tackle systematically many of the discriminatory laws or inequities that were embedded in Federal law that failed to recognize the dual role women were playing, both at home as well as in the workplace.

We began to work on these issues one by one because there were so many issues across-the-board that were affecting women, where they were ultimately bearing the burden and the consequences of these inequitable laws. We did that with respect to pensions, for example, where women discovered that after their husbands died, their pensions had been canceled.

We discovered it when it came to family and medical leave, which took us the better part of 7 years to enact that legislation. But, again, women were bearing the burden of taking care of their ailing parents or their children at home and paying the consequences in the workplace.

Then, of course, there was the issue we discovered of discriminatory treatment in our clinical study trials. Regrettably, at the time our National Institutes of Health were actually discriminating against women and minorities, excluding them from clinical study trials because it was too complicated to include women in these study trials because we were biologically different. As a result, any of those treatments that were developed as a result of those trials could not be applied to women. Ultimately, this could make the difference between life and death because the kinds of procedures and treatments that were derived from these clinical study trials could not be applied to women.

When we discovered that these inequities and this discriminatory treatment existed, we set to work on how to redress this wrong. It is hard to believe there was a time in America where women and minorities were systematically excluded from these trials that, as I said, had lifesaving implications. Who would have thought that women's health would have been the missing page in America's medical textbooks or merely an afterthought.

So I, as a cochair along with Congresswoman Pat Schroeder in the House, on behalf of the caucus, and, of course, then-Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI in the Senate teamed up in a close bipartisan, bicameral collaboration to establish the groundbreaking Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health so that never again would women be overlooked when it came to key clinical study trials that were underwritten by the Federal taxpayers and Federal funds. In fact, Senator MIKULSKI, as I well recall, launched the key panel of stakeholders at Bethesda to give this initiative critical national attention and momentum—as only she could—as well as fundamental policy changes that ultimately resulted from that panel that reverberate to this day, resulting as well in lifesaving medical discoveries for America's women.

That is the passion and power of Senator MIKULSKI that has led her to this historic day. BARBARA is not about legacy, she is about problem-solving. As somebody described it, her ideology is grounded in the practical, and that is so true. It is not only the practical but giving power to the people and developing practical solutions in their everyday lives.

She is a guardian of the common good, a woman who redefines the word ''trailblazer,'' a pioneer of public policy. Senator MIKULSKI continues to shape the landscape of our Nation for the better, with a force and a might and a stature, one of the giants of public service, not just in our time but for all time.

On the occasion of Senator MIKULSKI's recordbreaking service, we congratulate her, we salute her, and we are honored to be able to express a profound appreciation for her extraordinary and legendary tenure in the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mrs. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon to celebrate BARBARA MIKULSKI's service to this country. I had the honor of presiding for the last hour and heard the statements of so many of my colleagues. I heard them talk about how, when she joined this Chamber in 1986, BARBARA MIKULSKI was the first woman elected to the Senate who was not preceded by a husband or a father,

the first woman elected to the statewide office to serve the State of Maryland, and only the 16th woman to have served in the Senate ever.

Today she is truly the dean of women Senators. She is a mentor and a friend to the rest of us, and she has always set the bar high. This is a woman who took on city hall as a young social worker in Baltimore—and won. This is a woman who has championed landmark legislation that has touched the lives of millions on issues ranging from health care to education to civil rights. She has shattered glass ceilings, not just in the Senate but in the Congress as a whole.

If that is not enough, she has even graced the glossy pages of Vogue magazine. Most of you may not have seen the photos that were taken in front of the Capitol Building with a number of other women leaders, including Meryl Streep, who was in town for a screening of her film ''The Iron Lady.'' So I think it is fitting, to borrow a phrase from the Iron Lady herself, Margaret Thatcher, who famously said, ''In politics, if you want anything said, ask a man; if you want anything done, ask a woman.''

I don't think my male colleagues who are here today will take offense at that one since anyone who has ever worked with BARBARA MIKULSKI knows she is a force of nature. She may not be the tallest Member of the Senate, but she is certainly the most tenacious. She is a tireless advocate for the people of her State, and she has a fierce and enduring love for those she represents. She knows where to pick her battles, and we have seen her face some tough debates in the Senate over the past few years. Whether it was working to take C-sections off lists of preexisting conditions at insurance companies or fighting to ensure equal pay for equal work for women or promoting better educational opportunities for children with special needs or ensuring that our troops and families receive the benefits that they have earned and that they deserve, she has never stopped working for fairness, justice, and decency.

The daughter of a smalltown grocery store owner, she has made strengthening the middle class the centerpiece of her economic agenda because, as she always puts it, the women in the Senate understand issues not just at the macro level but also at the macaroni-and-cheese level.

When BARBARA MIKULSKI came to the Senate 26 years ago, she lit a torch that has brightened the path for so many of us, for the 16 other women Senators who serve today and for all the future generations of women leaders who will lead our country forward. I am humbled to call her a colleague and a friend, and I am honored to celebrate her incredible service to our country today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there are several of my colleagues here who are continuing their tributes to Senator MIKULSKI. I have a statement that was scheduled at 5 p.m. that will take all of 10 minutes, and then I will yield the floor at that point. I don't know if Members who are on the floor want to establish a queue of who will follow, but if anyone wants to make that unanimous consent request, I see that Senator CARPER and Senator CANTWELL are here on this side, Senator COATS is on the other side. I don't know if Senator SESSIONS is planning to speak after I have spoken on a substantive matter beyond the UC request.

Mr. SESSIONS. No, although I wouldn't mind seizing the opportunity to speak about Senator MIKULSKI for a minute, but otherwise, if the Senator has no——

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am going to give a statement and make a UC request that I planned at 5 p.m. And if I could suggest I be followed by Senator SESSIONS, and then Senator CARPER, Senator COATS——

Mr. COATS. If the Senator will yield on that, I don't want to interrupt the tribute to Senator MIKULSKI, and I know the Senator has some business he has arranged. I will give mine another time. You don't have to include me in the queue. I don't want to spoil the party. The tribute is worthwhile, and I will find another time to do this.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to make an admission. I have spoken about Senator MIKULSKI earlier and this is a different issue. I suggest after Senator SESSIONS that Senator CARPER and Senator CANTWELL follow. I ask unanimous consent that the Senators be recognized in the order I have noted.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. Would the Senator wish to request that the non-tribute-related portion of the discussion be put in a separate place in the RECORD?

Mr. DURBIN. That is what I was about to ask the Chair, to have permission that my statement not related to Senator MIKULSKI be placed in a separate part of the RECORD.

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

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN and Mr. SESSIONS are printed in the RECORD under ''Cameras in the Courtroom.'')

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, although I do not have prepared remarks, I wish to join with my colleagues in making a few comments about Senator MIKULSKI.

Senator MIKULSKI is a great Senator. She is a delight to work with, a formidable adversary, and a formidable ally in any important debate. She is someone whom all of us respect and admire. It surprises me she has been at this business so long. It doesn't seem as though it is possible. She certainly hasn't lost her enthusiasm for the job and she has played an important role in quite a number of issues with which the country has had to deal.

I remember her leadership on an important issue during the post-9/11 time, when we were wrestling with how to deal with security for our country. She spoke firmly and strongly in favor of firm action to defend America from attack.

Another issue I don't think has been mentioned but is exceedingly important—something I have observed her deal with and provide leadership on for some time—is space and NASA. She is one of the absolutely most knowledgeable and experienced Members of this Senate and the entire Congress in dealing with the complexities and the needs of NASA and she is a champion and advocate for exploration of space. This is an area where America has led the world, and for all her time in the Senate, she has been a champion of advocating that the United States maintain this leadership because I think we share the view that America is a nation of explorers. We are a nation that leads the world in exploring and it is part of our DNA. So I appreciate her leadership in that particular area, as I have watched her with great admiration in her activities.

I didn't realize this tribute would be going on this afternoon and I didn't have prepared remarks, but I wish to join with my colleagues to say how much I appreciate her efforts. We celebrate her great accomplishment in the Senate. I believe that as we go forward, we will find that on issue after issue she will play a critical and a positive role in making America a better place.

I thank the Chair and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I wish to follow my colleague from Alabama and speak for just a few minutes about our friend and colleague, Senator MIKULSKI, who celebrates her milestone through her public service to the people of Maryland.

I asked my staff to go to the Web page for Senator MIKULSKI, her Senate office, and I came across one paragraph which I wish to read to my colleagues, if I may. It says:

> Barbara Mikulski has never forgotten her roots. Throughout her career she has returned each night to her home State of Baltimore, Maryland. From community activist to U.S. Senator, she has never changed her view that all politics is indeed local and that her job is to serve the people in their day-to-day needs as well as prepare this country for the future.

Sometimes people have come to Congress over the years and they come understanding clearly that our job is to serve. Over time, somehow they lose that thought a little bit and it is less clear who is to be served and who is to be the servant. She has never forgotten who the servant is. She knows she came as a servant, and she will leave someday as a servant—hopefully, not anytime soon.

If we ask most people around here what are maybe one or two words that best describe BARBARA MIKULSKI, I think a lot of people would say she is a fighter. Let me just say, if someone is

an advocate for a particular cause, she is the person one wants in the foxhole with them. There is no better advocate, and there is no better or more able opponent on an issue. It is a lot better to have her on your side than it is to have her against you.

I take the train home at night. I go through Baltimore on my way to Wilmington, DE. Along the route, we go by a place called Aberdeen. Sometimes the train stops there; sometimes it does not. We have seen Aberdeen Proving Grounds literally consolidated from around the country. Much of the important research activity the Army does is at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds. The person more than anybody else who has made that possible is BARBARA MIKULSKI. It is a vast facility, with tens of thousands of employees who I think are mostly civilian and a campus of over 100,000 acres that does great work, helping to provide for our defense against all kinds of attack, foreign and domestic. She is a great person to have on your side in leading that fight.

One of the other things I love about BARBARA is her devotion to first responders. There is a big national fire school in a town called Gaithersburg, MD. She has helped make that place possible to not only train folks who are first responders for the people of Maryland, but they train as well first responders for virtually every State in every corner of this Nation. People will go to bed tonight knowing that if there is a fire or a problem or an incident in their community, it will be responded to, and they can thank BARBARA MIKULSKI for helping to ensure the folks trained there are ready to do that.

As much as anybody I know, she is a person who values service. AmeriCorps is an organization that encourages young people—really people of all ages—to volunteer and to serve. Volunteers are the ages of our pages and a whole lot older and the ages of guys like me. We all have an obligation to serve and to bring that spirit of service, whether or not we are in public life.

I was struck by the fact that she often opened the store as a kid, beginning a lot of her days as her dad opened the family grocery store, early in the morning in east Baltimore. I was born in West Virginia in a town called Beckley. I lived there for about the first 6 years or so of my life, but I would go back many summers, and I had the opportunity to work there for a supermarket, a mom-and-pop supermarket, with my own grandfather who opened the store almost 6 days a week, and I had the opportunity to see him and his work and what he brought to that store every day as the butcher. I think I know more about serving by working my summers in that store than anything else I have ever done. I suspect one of the reasons BARBARA has adopted and retained the spirit of a servant is because of her childhood and growing up and seeing her own family, her own dad, in that particular store.

I mentioned my grandfather in West Virginia. His wife, my grandmother, suffered from Alzheimer's disease. My grandmother's mother suffered from Alzheimer's disease. My own mother suffered from Alzheimer's disease. I don't think there is anybody in this body who has done more to lead the fight to ensure that this scourge of our society—and the scourge of people all over the world—is reined in and overcome. When that day comes, people will stand and say: I did something about this. Nobody in this body I think can take more credit for conquering Alzheimer's disease and dementia than BARBARA MIKULSKI.

Finally, when people think of BARBARA, they think of a fighter, an advocate for voluntarism, and some of the other things I talked about. I don't know that many people think of her as an athlete, but I will say that she is very a big advocate for leveling the playing field. She wants to make sure people not just in athletic endeavors have a level playing field in which to compete, but she wants to make sure young people coming from the most impoverished backgrounds have an opportunity and have a real shot at life to get a decent education as a child, the chance to go to college and to increase their potential to not just earn money and support their families but to live productive lives. Those are just some of the things I think about when I think of BARBARA MIKULSKI.

I will close by saying she had been in the House I think for 6 years when I arrived in 1982, 1983, and for all the time we served there together, she was always very encouraging of me, very supportive of me as her Delmarva buddy, as we shared the Delmarva Peninsula. Even to this day we work together to make sure we have a strong, vibrant poultry industry on the Delmarva Peninsula. I like to say we are still Delmarva buddies as we look out for the mutual concerns of our respective States.

With that having been said, let me yield back my time. I see Senator CANTWELL is ready to speak. My guess is, she is going to say some more things about BARBARA. But those are some things I am glad I had a chance to say.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I do rise to celebrate the remarkable achievements of my colleague from Maryland, Senator MIKULSKI.

Last January we celebrated an obvious achievement of her becoming the longest serving female Senator. And last Saturday that milestone entered another chapter, with her 12,858 days of serving the people of Maryland in Congress, which means she is now the longest serving female Member of Congress.

I know BARBARA MIKULSKI started her career fighting for Fells Point, a particular location in the Baltimore area that she thought deserved and needed to be protected, and that galvanized her to 35 years of service, where she has been a trailblazer on so many issues.

Many people have talked about those today—about being the first woman elected to statewide office in Maryland, the first Democratic woman to serve in both Houses of Congress; the first Democratic woman to sit in a Senate leadership position, and the first Democratic woman to be elected to the Senate in her own right.

Throughout her career, she has faithfully provided a very strong voice for the people of Maryland. But it is here in the Senate we have all gotten to see BARBARA MIKULSKI, the dean of the women Senators, and to see her incredible work as a trailblazer on so many important issues.

She has been a tireless champion on issues from pay equity to increasing access to college education, for women's health, for women's health care law, and time and time again she has proven she knows how to fight on the right side of the issues.

For the women of the Senate, she is an incredibly important ally. When it comes to each of us who comes to the U.S. Senate, to find our way and to make our own mark, BARBARA MIKULSKI is the Senator who is always there with you to make sure you can achieve what you want to for the State you represent.

I know for me I am very excited—my colleague from Alabama was mentioning Senator MIKULSKI's love of NASA and space exploration—in that I can say Senator MIKULSKI is certainly interested also in sci-fi, and I would call her a ''techie'' Senator because she certainly has shown a great deal of interest in technology and science.

As the Chair of the Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Subcommittee, she was a key partner in the funding of key science and technology issues, and for us in the State of Washington, when we needed a new Doppler radar technology system, she was there to help ensure that those people who lived in coastal regions were going to have the appropriate protections they needed for understanding inclement weather.

She also has helped in prioritizing efforts such as the cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland—something we in the Northwest relate to because we strive to have the same cleanup of Puget Sound.

We have worked together on important legislation, such as passing the Lilly Ledbetter legislation.

But it is BARBARA MIKULSKI—when it comes to protecting women's access to health care or standing up to any attack on Medicare—who is the most articulate, the most determined, the most persevering advocate to make sure women's issues and their cause are understood in the U.S. Senate.

I was proud to stand with her when she went up against the House plan to defund critical women's health care access and there was a near shutdown of

government. As people tried to pressure Planned Parenthood, she was there to make sure we continued important programs such as breast cancer screening.

So today I join my colleagues from the Senate to thank her for those years of service in the U.S. Congress, both in the House and the Senate. While she may represent Maryland, we all want to claim that we are better off as a country having BARBARA MIKULSKI in the U.S. Senate.

And to my colleagues—or to the young people who are here with us on the Senate floor—to understand this moment and achievement, you have to understand that in the whole history of our country, there have only been 39 women Senators, and a good number of those women Senators only served a few days or a few years. So the fact that somebody has achieved not just a seat in the U.S. Senate but a leadership position in the U.S. Senate is an incredible achievement.

We are glad she has represented a time when women have ascended to leadership in the U.S. Senate, where she is considered one of the wise Members when it comes to strategy on so many policy issues.

We are better off as a body because BARBARA MIKULSKI has served with us, and we are looking forward to many more years of wisdom and, hopefully, many more women Senators joining the ranks of BARBARA MIKULSKI in their tenure.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise today also to pay tribute to my colleague, the senior Senator from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI.

As everyone has said, this is a landmark, this is a milestone: the longest serving woman Senator and Member of Congress in the history of Congress, serving more than 35 years.

As a relatively junior Member of this body, I love BARBARA MIKULSKI. I love her because she calls me ''FRANKEN.'' That is music to my ears. We are in the caucus lunch, I may be in her way, and she says: FRANKEN.

I am not only a relatively junior Senator, I actually kind of recently was a comedian at one point. And she is really funny—BARBARA. I remember the first time I saw her speak—it was years ago, years ago; I cannot remember what the event was—and I am going to try to quote her joke. It was her joke, remember, about herself. She talked about her first campaign effort. I think it was for city council or something like that. She said: I knocked on 7,387 doors, and I walked a total of 372 miles, and I didn't lose a pound.

So I love BARBARA. And she is a force—a force—of nature. Being the dean of women here is not her most commanding title. Her most commanding title is: a fighter. She is a fighter. When she commits herself to a cause, she is a true champion.

She is a true champion for America's seniors, preserving pensions; of Medicare, defending Medicare—boy, do not attack Medicare around BARBARA MIKULSKI—and combating poverty. No one works harder for quality education, fighting to make sure every child has a quality education, so that child can pursue the American dream. And she is committed to fulfilling our country's promises to our veterans, which is so important, and to increasing community service and voluntarism.

As anyone who has watched proceedings here in the Senate knows, BARBARA MIKULSKI, as my colleague from Washington stated, is the greatest champion in the body for women's health. Here is something that is pretty amazing to understand. I want the pages to hear this. She fought to include women in NIH clinical trials. Women were not included in the National Institutes of Health clinical trials until she made sure they were. This is hard to believe, isn't it? But in your 16 years of life, you—at 16, you cannot conceive of this. This is how backward we were. Think of what she did. That is who we are talking about today.

She has improved access for women to mammograms and cancer screenings—for all women. She has fought for women to have their own say over their own body and reproductive system. Basically what I am saying is, when you have BARBARA MIKULSKI on your side, you have a strong voice in the U.S. Senate.

We have heard reference to her accomplishment on the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. When advocating for this bill, Senator MIKULSKI said:

> Women earn just 77 cents for every dollar [their] male counterparts make. Women of color get paid even less. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act will empower women to fight for fair pay by once again making employers accountable for pay discrimination. I will fight on the Senate floor to get this bill passed.

And the bill was passed. It was the first bill President Obama signed in office.

Senator MIKULSKI and I share a number of passions. One of them is early childhood education. Increasing early childhood education—access to it—is one of my top priorities because we know over and over that the benefits of early childhood education have been demonstrated. And BARBARA knows this.

I wanted to have a hearing on just the economic benefits of early childhood education—just the economic benefits—because a child who has a quality early childhood education is less likely to be a special ed kid, is less likely to be left back a grade, has better health outcomes; a girl is less likely to get pregnant before she graduates from high school, a child is more likely to graduate high school, more likely to go to college, more likely to graduate college, more likely to get a good-paying job and pay taxes, and much less likely to go to prison. It has been shown over and over that the cost-benefit is, for every $1 spent, like $16 in return.

I wanted to get a hearing just on this. Because we were talking about education, I thought this needed to be discussed, and we needed experts, economists who were credible on this. So I went to BARBARA and she, of course, said: Oh, yeah. OK. Let's do it. She is Chair of the Subcommittee on Children and Families. I thought that would be a good place to do it, except I am not on that subcommittee. I am on the HELP Committee, which this is a subcommittee of, but I am not on that subcommittee. She said: OK, that doesn't matter. You come anyway. And not only that but: What witness do you want?

She let me pick a witness, Art Rolnick, an expert in early childhood education—on the economics of it—who started out as an economist at the Federal Reserve in Minneapolis and got into the economic benefits of it.

She is a true ally. She is someone who used her resources as chairwoman of a committee to make sure something you feel strongly about will be aired, will be discussed.

You learn from BARBARA that what we do around here is not so much about policy, it is about people. For her, it is about the people of Maryland. She goes to bat for them time and time and time again. It is about kids. And it is about women, who often have to be both the breadwinner and the caregiver, and who should have every right and every opportunity at work and in society that men have.

As both a Member of the Senate and as a father of a wonderful daughter, I am enormously grateful to Senator MIKULSKI for being a tremendous role model to women in this country, for having fought her way to the Senate, and for proving that legislating was not a man's job—or only a man's job—it is a man's job too.

This body is so much the richer for her, and Americans are so much better off as a result. But her work, our work is not over. Out of 100 Senators, there are still only 17 women. Our Nation is facing tremendously difficult challenges, and having more women like Senator MIKULSKI in the room will help us solve those problems. I am glad she is here leading the way.

With that, I would like to thank BARBARA for her leadership, her friendship, and for being such a fierce advocate. Congratulations, BARBARA, on your achievements thus far and on this milestone. I look forward to many years fighting alongside you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise, along with so many colleagues, to pay tribute to Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, an extraordinary woman and Senator, someone who has become the longest serving woman in the history of the

Senate, indeed, in the history of the Congress. She surpassed, on January 5, 2011, the record of Republican Senator Margaret Chase Smith as the longest serving Senator. Just this Saturday, she became the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress, surpassing the tenure of Edith Nourse Rogers, a Republican Congresswoman from Massachusetts, who served in the House from 1925 to 1960.

Senator MIKULSKI is the first female Democrat to be elected to the Senate in her own right in 1986. She is a woman of many firsts. She is indeed the dean of the Senate women—I would actually say a dean of the Senate, with her great energy, her great eloquence, and her great passion, particularly for those who are often overlooked in our society. She comes at it honestly. She was a social worker in Baltimore, helping at-risk children and educating seniors about Medicare before being elected to the House of Representatives.

She has taken that concern for the vulnerable and a particular passion for the State of Maryland forward every day she has served in the House and Senate. She has served on numerous committees. She is a subcommittee chairperson on the Appropriations Committee—Commerce-Justice-Science. She has devoted herself to those issues, and many more. She serves on the Select Committee on Intelligence and has been a key member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. She has left her mark on a broad range of programs that touch each and every American family. She has been particularly active in women's health, ensuring that women were included in NIH clinical trials, where in the past they were ignored.

Since one cannot ignore BARBARA MIKULSKI—which is virtually impossible—she made it a reality that they cannot ignore women in NIH clinical trials, requiring Federal standards for mammographies, ensuring uninsured women have access to screenings and treatment for breast and cervical cancer. She increased research dollars for Alzheimer's and enhanced the Older Americans Act.

She has been, since her first days in the House of Representatives, at the forefront in advocating for better health care and education particularly for the most vulnerable among us. She has been a champion of national service, understanding that in a great country one has to contribute as well as benefit.

She said one of the things she is most proud of—in her words—''strengthening the safety net for seniors by passing the Spousal Anti-Impoverishment Act. This important legislation helps keep seniors from going bankrupt while paying for a spouse's nursing home care.''

That is a fitting and representative example of her service. Throughout her service, she has maintained national priorities but has never taken her eye off Maryland. She commutes every evening back to Baltimore. She works hard to ensure that the people in Maryland benefit because of her activities.

I also thank her for the kindness and help she has given me personally—her concern, for example, with the fishing community in Rhode Island, which is under her jurisdiction on the Appropriations Committee, and in other ways. She has been terribly important and kind to us. She was instrumental in helping us to secure funding for the HOPE VI project in Newport, RI, which has created extraordinary beneficial housing for a mix of incomes in Newport. It is one of the most attractive as well as one of the most stable communities I think anyplace in the Nation. She has been there to help us constantly.

I could go on and on, as my colleagues have said. I simply want to say at this special moment in Senator MIKULSKI's career, we thank her, admire her, respect her, and she has set a great example for us. In the days ahead, she will not only continue to inspire and sustain us, she will continue to sustain and lead in her State.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, some time ago, I was reading a book about the beginnings of the interstate highway system in our country. I came across a paragraph when the highway builders and the Federal Government were going to run the interstate highway through some stable middle-class, working-class neighborhoods of Baltimore. The highway administration was greeted by an organizer who, on behalf of citizens of this neighborhood, said this is not the place to put this highway. She was successful in convincing them that the highway should go elsewhere so it would not be disruptive of so many homes, well-established small businesses, and the cohesive community in that part of Baltimore. The woman who led that effort several decades ago was BARBARA MIKULSKI. She was not yet on the city council. She was a citizen who spoke for her neighbors and has continued to do that as a member of the city council and then as a Member of the House of Representatives and for many years—3½ decades—of the Senate.

We heard Senator REID and others earlier today talk about Senator MIKULSKI being the first female Democrat to serve in both the House and Senate—to be elected to the Senate without succeeding a husband or a father and first to chair an Appropriations subcommittee. Most important, she helped to blaze this path. In 1987, there were only two female Senators. One was the daughter of a Presidential nominee a generation earlier, and the other was BARBARA MIKULSKI. Today, there are 17 female Members of the Senate. It doesn't look like America yet. There is not anything close to the number of minority members as a percentage of the population, but I hope that changes. I think it will. It doesn't come close to representing the gender makeup of our society. But to go from 2 female Senators, when she first came, to 17 today—and if I can predict elections, which none of us can, and we certainly cannot try—I think there is a good chance there will be a number of additional women in this body this time next year.

I wish to say a couple more things about Senator MIKULSKI on a less serious note. I have been privileged to serve on two committees with Senator MIKULSKI—one being the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. During the health care legislation, she was so helpful to so many of the causes we care about and to justice in this country, and on the Appropriations Committee, where she cuts a wide swathe of involvement for Maryland and this country, she champions women's health and many talked about this earlier. She cares so much about the National Institutes of Health, not just because it is located in Maryland but because it matters so much for scientific research, for curing a whole host of diseases and preventing diseases, and the number of jobs NIH creates, not just government jobs but the jobs that come out of commercialization of scientific research.

My State is one of the leaders; whether the jobs come out of Cincinnati Children's Hospital, Southwest Hospital, and where Case Western Reserve University is and its medical center around Cleveland, we see that kind commercialization.

I often call her Coach B because she is someone who has been around here a long time and is always willing to advise newer and younger Members. She has been following, especially in my State, what is important, the issue of health care. My State has some of the leading health care institutions in America. Also, what she has done with the space program—the only NASA facility north of the Mason-Dixon line is in Cleveland, with a satellite in Sandusky, NASA Glenn, named after former Senator and astronaut, John Glenn. She has been one of the strongest advocates for the space program, and science, technology, and R&D. She has been particularly helpful to me as I fight for the kind of work NASA Glenn does in Cleveland, and I am appreciative of her for that.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

(The remarks of Mr. WHITEHOUSE pertaining to the introduction of S. 2219 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

OHIO'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL EXCELLENCE

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I rise to talk about a new record that has been set. It has nothing to do with the number of votes the highway bill garnered last week in the Senate, and it has nothing to do with length of service of Senator MIKULSKI.

For the first time in history, this year one State has four teams in the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Men's Division I basketball tournament: Ohio.

A special congratulations to the Ohio State University, in Columbus; the University of Cincinnati, in Hamilton County; Ohio University, in Athens, OH; and Xavier University, also in Cincinnati, for their outstanding run so far and making our entire State proud.

I am hosting, for the fifth time, an annual Ohio College President's Conference next week. We bring in 50 to 60 college presidents to meet with each other and with me and we bring in people from the administration, Republicans and Democrats, House and Senate Members, who lead on higher education issues. We bring 55 or 60 college presidents in from Ohio for a day and a half, and there are public and private institutions, 2-year community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities. They learn best practices from one another. They build relationships that help all 55 or 60 of these college Presidents to do better.

Perhaps, we will talk more about college sports this year because of these four Ohio teams that made the Sweet 16.

We also know another point of reference for Ohio this year was that March Madness started in Dayton, in what has become an important tradition to Miami Valley and our country. This weekend, before the games started, Dayton's Oregon District hosted the First Four Festival, where 15,000 people crowded local restaurants and bars, listened to live music, and watched games on big screens.

A few days later, President Obama and British Prime Minister David Cameron came to the same city where the Dayton peace accords were negotiated and joined the Dayton community and teams from Kentucky, Mississippi, New York and Utah and their fans to watch the first rounds of the NCAA Division I men's tournament at the UD Arena. The UD—University of Dayton—Arena now holds the national record for the number of NCAA basketball tournament games held in a single venue.

The business community in Dayton, one of the most active in the country—the Dayton Development Coalition—rallied together to make sure military families from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base were able to attend, and $3.5 million was pumped into the local economy, showcasing the Miami Valley's world-class tourism infrastructure of hotels, parks, entertainment, and recreation.

We saw the same thing later in the week in the Arena District of Columbus, where the city hosted games on the opening weekend. Local Columbus leaders and businesses hosted teams from St. Louis, North Carolina, Michigan, New York, Tennessee, California, and Washington, DC, with their fans.

The city expected a $10 million impact on the local community, with tens of thousands of people staying at hotels, eating in restaurants, and enjoying one of the fastest growing cities in America, where, I might add, the Presiding Officer once lived. We saw a boost in tourism in northern Ohio, where Bowling Green hosted the first and second rounds of the NCAA women's basketball tournament. Organizers in Bowling Green said the games were more than about basketball, it was about people from across the Nation coming to town and boosting the sales of small businesses.

All the excitement and economic activity goes to show that Ohio is a tremendous attraction of basketball tourism and basketball talent. As the tournaments continue, and Ohio's teams continue to win, I look forward to working with our communities and our business leaders to further leverage our assets in tourism and recreation to help create jobs throughout our State and to promote economic development.

I thank the Presiding Officer, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following morning business on Thursday, March 22, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 3606; that the time until 12:30 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that at 12:30 p.m., the postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate proceed to votes on the following: Reed No. 1931, Merkley No. 1844, as amended, if amended, and passage of H.R. 3606, as amended, if amended; that there be 2 minutes, equally divided in the usual form in between the votes; that upon disposition of H.R. 3606, the Senate then proceed to the consideration of the House message to accompany S. 2038, the STOCK Act; that there be 4 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form prior to the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to concur in the House message to accompany S. 2038; that if cloture is invoked on the motion to concur, that all postcloture time be yielded back, the motion to concur with an amendment be withdrawn, and the motion to concur be agreed to; that the motions to reconsider relative to the above items be considered made and laid upon the table; and that all after the first vote be 10-minute votes.

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

CAMERAS IN THE COURTROOM

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, by this time next week, the Supreme Court will have finished hearing oral arguments in the case challenging the constitutionality of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. How important is this Supreme Court case on health care reform? Well, health care is such an important issue that Congress spent 1 year drafting and debating a bill that the Court is going to consider next week.

Health care has been a critical issue for so long in our country that in the last century, nine different Presidents have spent time, energy, and political capital fighting for reform. It is so important that the Supreme Court reserved 6 hours for oral argument over the course of 3 days to consider the act's constitutionality. The last time the Court dedicated that kind of time to any one case was in 1966—if I am not mistaken, that was 46 years ago—when it considered Miranda v. Arizona. Not even the health care case is important enough for the Supreme Court to justify breaking its antiquated tradition of allowing cameras to televise the proceedings, so the American people are not going to have a chance to see and hear these historic arguments for themselves as they take place.

I cannot predict the outcome of the case, but I can tell you what to expect just outside the doors of the Supreme Court. It is a scene we have seen over and over again for decades. Thousands will gather outside the Court. Many are going to camp overnight, sleeping on the sidewalk in the hopes of getting about 1 of 200 seats available to the public. The vast majority of those wanting to see the Supreme Court argument on one of the most important cases of our time will be told: No, you are not allowed to come inside the Court. We don't have room for you. In a democratic society that values transparency and participation, there cannot be any valid justification for such a powerful element of government to operate largely outside the view of the American people.

For too long the American people have been prevented from observing open sessions of the Supreme Court. Except for the privileged few, the VIPs, the members of the Supreme Court bar or the press, the most powerful Court in our land—some might argue in the world—is inaccessible to the public and shrouded in mystery.

I am pleased to stand in the Judiciary Committee with Senator GRASSLEY, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, asking that the Senate pass our bipartisan bill that would require televising open Supreme Court proceedings. With the benefit of modern technology, the Supreme Court proceedings can be televised using unobtrusive cameras and the Court's existing audio recording capability. Our bill respects the constitutional rights of the parties before the Court and respects the discretion of the Justices.

The Court can decline to televise any proceeding where the Justices determine by a majority vote that doing so would violate due process rights of one or more parties.

In our view—Senator GRASSLEY and myself—this is a reasonable approach that balances the public's need for information and transparency, the constitutional rights of those before the Court, and the discretion of the Justices.

It is no secret that Senator GRASSLEY and I have strong disagreements about the actual law that is going to be considered by the Court. We have taken to the floor many times to explain our positions. Despite our disagreement on the substance of the health care bill, Senator GRASSLEY and I agree on a bipartisan basis to stand united in full support of S. 1945, which would finally bring transparency and open access to Supreme Court proceedings.

We are not the only Members of this body who believe these proceedings would produce greater accountability. In past years the Cameras in the Courtroom Act enjoyed bipartisan support. The last sponsor of the act before he left the Senate was Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania. This version of the bill, very similar to his own, has the support of Senators CORNYN, KLOBUCHAR, SCHUMER, BLUMENTHAL, GILLIBRAND, HARKIN, and BEGICH. As Senator GRASSLEY would note, Democrats and Republicans from both Chambers have written to the Supreme Court asking it to permit live televised broadcasts of the health care reform arguments.

In November, Senators BLUMENTHAL, SCHUMER, and I wrote a letter to the Chief Justice making a request to open the Supreme Court for this historic argument and let America hear the arguments made before the Court and the questions asked by the Justices in open court. Chief Justice Roberts responded to our request last week, and it sounds as though he sent the same letter to Senator GRASSLEY. The Chief Justice informed us that the Supreme Court has respectfully declined to televise the health care arguments, but that the Court would graciously offer an alternative.

Here is the alternative: The Court will post the audio recordings and unofficial transcripts to the Court's Web site a few hours after the arguments are over. For that gesture, I guess we can congratulate the U.S. Supreme Court for entering the radio age. America entered the radio age 90 years ago. The Supreme Court is catching up with a delayed broadcast-audio only. But I think America deserves better.

Decisions that affect our Nation should be accessible by the people who are affected by those decisions and they should be produced in a way that Americans can both see and hear. The day of the fireside chat is gone. The day of radio transmissions exclusively is gone. Television—and increasingly even the Internet—is the dominant medium for communicating messages and ideas in modern America. It is not too much to ask the third branch of government at the highest level to share the arguments before the Court with the people of America. Understand, there will be hundreds of people present and watching this as it occurs. It is not confidential or private. It is only kept away from the rest of America because this Court doesn't want America to see the proceedings.

The Supreme Court is an elite institution in our government. Every member of the Supreme Court went to one of two Ivy league law schools. Most of the clerks before the Court come from one of seven law schools. None of the current Justices has run for public office. None of the current Justices has tried a death penalty case. And the lawyers who appear before the Supreme Court are part of a small and exclusive club. Perhaps this limited exposure is why many on the Court don't seem to fully appreciate the impact its decisions have on everyday America, and why the American people deserve to have more access to the Court's public proceedings. Since the Supreme Court is the final word on constitutionality, on issues that impact the lives of every American, the American people should have full and free access to its open proceedings on television.

Let's be clear about one thing: Our bill only applies to court sessions that are already open to the public. Supreme Court Justices should be able to consult with each other, review cases, and deliberate privately. No one in this bill, or otherwise, is calling for those private deliberations to be televised. I believe that televising private deliberations or closed sessions of the Court would cause harm to our judicial system. Our bill does not require that and I would not support that. Open sessions of the Court, however, where members of the public are already invited to observe are a different matter. They should be televised in real time and widely available.

Some who oppose our bill say that the elite cadre of seasoned lawyers with the rare opportunity to argue before the highest Court in the land will grandstand in front of the cameras, risking their professional reputations and even their clients' cases. Some say that the Court's Justices, who have been subjected to the most rigorous vetting process known to man and the most widely covered confirmation hearings, will shrink from the camera's glaring lens. I don't buy it. The experience of the State and Federal courts that have allowed the open proceedings to be televised proves these fears are unfounded.

While the Federal courts of appeals have not permitted cameras to broadcast all appellate proceedings, there was a 3-year pilot project in 1990 that assessed the impact of cameras in the Federal courts. Listen to what happened as a result of the pilot program. At the end of the day 19 of the 20 judges most involved concluded that the presence of cameras in the Federal courts ''had no effect on the administration of justice.''

Don't take my word for it. Kenneth Starr, former Solicitor General and independent counsel, supports our bill and said this:

> This fear seems groundless . . . The idea that cameras would transform the [Supreme Court] into ''Judge Judy'' is ludicrous.

For more than 30 years State courts have broadcast their proceedings and, in fact, what they found hasn't detracted at all from the pursuit of justice. Every State in our Nation permits all or part of the appellate court proceedings to be recorded for broadcast on television or streaming on the Internet. Expanding access to the Supreme Court by televising its proceedings should not be controversial. Public scrutiny of the Supreme Court proceedings produces greater accountability, transparency, understanding, and access to the decision-making in government. Congressional debates have been fully televised for more than three decades.

There are people who follow the C–SPAN broadcast religiously. I know. I meet them regularly. As I said in the Judiciary Committee, people will come up to me and say: One of your colleagues looks a little bit under the weather. Does he have the flu? Is he sick? By observing C–SPAN or following the floor of the Senate and knowing each of us, they think on a more personal basis. They hear these statements, they listen to the debates, and they feel better informed about their government. Wouldn't the same apply across the street in the Supreme Court?

Opponents of our bill say the public will be misinformed because all they see are brief clips of the Court's proceedings that could be misconstrued. As I said, this argument sounds a lot like an editorial from a few years ago, and it said:

> Keeping cameras out [of the Supreme Court] to prevent people from getting the wrong idea is a little like removing the paintings from an art museum out of fear that visitors might not have the art history background to appreciate them.

In 1986, Chief Justice Burger wrote the following words in the Supreme Court's Press-Enterprise Company v. Superior Court opinion. These words are as true today as they were in 1986:

> [P]eople in an open society do not demand infallibility from their institutions, but it is difficult for them to accept what they are prohibited from observing.

The time has long since come for the Supreme Court—for the highest Court in our land—to open its doors and allow the American people to finally observe its proceedings.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1945

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, at this point I wish to make a unanimous consent request relative to this bill that would open the Supreme Court proceedings to be televised.

I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 319, S. 1945, a bill to permit the televising of Supreme Court proceedings; that the bill be read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I want to congratulate my colleague Senator DURBIN for his able articulation of his view. This is a matter that the Senate and the Congress has considered for quite a number of years. It has not decided to take this step to direct a coequal branch of government on how to conduct their business, and I don't think we should. So I think it would be inappropriate to pass this on a UC without a full debate and discussion and a full vote on it.

So I would say that.

Also, I would note the Justices have opposed this policy. I think we have a duty to respect the coequal branch of our government. They feel as though it would impact adversely the tenor and tone of the oral arguments. The Justices would also have to feel a burden and explain why they are asking a question, perhaps citing a case by name that all the lawyers would know but having to explain to nonlawyers now what is on their minds as a part of their process of questioning. So I think that is a factor.

I would also note it raises constitutional questions. Why would we want to push to the limit and perhaps push over the limit and try to dictate to a coequal branch how to conduct the adjudicative process? Not the political process; we are the political branch. Theirs is the nonpolitical branch, where Justices are given lifetime tenure so as to insulate them from pressure and to allow them to dispassionately decide complex issues. I would also note that in terms of what is said and how an argument goes, there is no difference, I suppose, between that and what goes on in chambers when the Justices meet in private and talk about what issues are before the Court and how they should be decided.

What is important in the adjudicative branch? What is the criteria and the fundamental essence of a judicial proceeding? Ultimately, it is the judgment. The judgment speaks. The arguments don't speak. The in camera discussions don't speak. The judgment itself represents the opinion of the Court. It is the law and the defining process.

I appreciate very much the work of my esteemed colleague. I know he loves the law; we both do. He believes this would improve justice in America. I can't conclude that to be correct. I believe Justices should be given the responsibility to conduct their branch consistent with their best judgment of how do to it. Therefore, I object. I thank and respect my colleague for his different opinion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 247, S. 671; that the committee-reported amendment to S. 671 be agreed to, and the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Reserving the right to object, it is my understanding the Judiciary Committee staff has been working on a package of important Judiciary Committee bills, including the very bill Senator SESSIONS has asked unanimous consent to move to—a bill which I quite likely will support.

Would the Senator be willing to modify his request to include the passage of other bills which are part of that package and have similarly important elements to them in terms of keeping America safe? They include the following: Calendar No. 246, S. 1792, the Strengthening Investigations of Sex Offenders and Missing Children Act; Calendar No. 233, S. 1793, the Investigative Assistance for Violent Crimes Act; and discharging the Judiciary Committee from further consideration of S. 1696, the Dale Long Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvements Act; agreeing to a substitute amendment which is at the desk, and passing the bill, as amended?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I appreciate the suggestion by the Senator from Illinois, as I believe I will be able to support all those bills, but I have information that Senators on our side oppose or have objections to two of them and would like to offer amendments or modify them. So I am not able to agree on behalf of colleagues that all the bills would be passed as written.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, until the time comes—and I hope it is soon—when we can reach an agreement on all four bills, I will object to moving one bill in the package.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would note that the Presiding Officer is a cosponsor with myself of S. 1792, the Strengthening Investigations of Sex Offenders and Missing Children Act of 2011, and perhaps we will be able to make that work sooner or later. I am sure we will.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

REMEMBERING FURMAN BISHER

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, this past weekend, Georgia lost a great citizen. Furman Bisher died in Fayetteville, GA, on Sunday afternoon of a tragic heart attack. He was the premier sports writer in the United States of America, covered every Super Bowl, every Masters, was at every major heavyweight fight.

From the day he started on his Royal manual typewriter until the day he died, he typed on that same manual typewriter that was over 60 years old. He was a brilliant writer, a compassionate individual, a great friend, and someone I looked up to very much. He was a pacesetter. He actually got the only interview of Shoeless Joe Jackson ever done by a reporter. He did it because of his cunning ability to be in the right place at the right time, and that twinkle in his eye that always made you want to take to Furman Bisher.

So as on the floor of the Senate today I pay tribute to Furman and his life, to all of his accomplishments in terms of the writing of sports in our State and around the world. To his family and loved ones, I extend my sympathy on behalf of not just myself but all of the citizens of Georgia.

IRISH E3 VISA BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon I had the honor of attending the annual Speaker's Luncheon celebrating the long and enduring partnership between the Irish and American people. Among the guests of honor were the President and Vice President and Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny. And this past Saturday, St. Patrick's Day, I joined Prime Minister Kenny, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel to march in Chicago's annual St. Patrick's Day parade. As one of the 40 million Americans of Irish descent, the chance to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with the Prime Minister of Ireland twice in 4 days is a rare joy.

At the parade on Saturday, Prime Minister Kenny hailed Chicago as ''the most American of American cities.'' It is also the most Irish of American cities, home to the largest population of Irish-Americans in the United States. On St. Patrick's Day in Chicago, the river and the beer both run green and it seems that everyone is Irish either by heritage or simply by osmosis.

There is good reason that Americans of all backgrounds embrace St. Patrick's Day with such enthusiasm. From our earliest days as a nation, America and Ireland and America have been united by unbreakable bonds of friendship and family and by a shared commitment to liberty and freedom.

In fact, there might not be a United States of America were it not for the Irish. That is not just my opinion. That was the assessment of General George Washington and of Britain's Lord

Mountjoy, who, in a speech to Parliament declared plainly, ''We have lost America through the Irish.''

The largest ethnic group to sign the Declaration of Independence were those with Irish roots, Charles Dunlop of County Tyrone printed the first copies, and the first man to read it before Congress was Charles Thomson of Derry, Secretary of the Continental Congress. When the Continental Congress was in desperate need of finances, supporters in Dublin, Cork, and other Irish cities took up collections to help the struggling new nation. Irish-born generals ranked among Washington's most trusted officers and Irish soldiers formed the backbone of Washington's army. At Valley Forge, it is estimated that almost half the army was Irish.

In the more than 2 centuries since then, America has been enriched immeasurably by the contributions of the Irish and Irish-Americans in every field and every walk of life.

Twenty American Presidents—nearly half—can trace their lineage to Ireland, from George Washington to Barack Obama of the Kearneys of Moneygall. And the contributions go both ways. Just as the sons of Erin helped make George Washington America's first President, it was a son of America, Brooklyn-born Eamonn deValera, who, in 1921, became the first president of a free Ireland.

In December, Senators SCHUMER, LEAHY and I introduced an amendment that recognizes the special relationship between the United States and Ireland. Our Irish E3 visa amendment would allow a small number of Irish citizens—10,500 a year—to work in America for 2 years, pay taxes and contribute to Social Security.

Our proposal is an amendment to the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act, which passed the House last November with overwhelming bipartisan support. Shortly after we introduced our amendment, my colleague from Illinois, Senator KIRK, and Senator BROWN of Massachusetts introduced a similar measure.

Our proposal is a common-sense measure that would improve the fairness and efficiency of our immigration system and further strengthen America's special relationship with Ireland, a nation to which we owe so much.

Our proposal has the support of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform, Chicago Celts for Immigration Reform headed by my friend Billy Lawless of Chicago, and many other organizations.

All 53 Democratic Senators—a solid majority of this Senate—have also pledged their support for our proposal. Despite this broad support inside and outside of Congress, at this time there is an objection on the Republican side to passing our bill.

We want to work with our Republican colleagues to break this impasse and create the Irish E3 visas this year. As Prime Minister Kenny has said, Ireland's economy will recover from its current difficulties. But with Irish emigration higher than it has been in decades, it is in the interests of both Ireland and America that we act now, without delay, to create a fair and legal way for Irish citizens to work temporarily in America.

Twenty-nine years ago, Speaker Tip O'Neill hosted the first St. Patrick's Day luncheon in Congress. His special guest at that first Speaker's St. Patrick's Day Luncheon was another Irish American leader who said, when he visited Ireland, ''Today I come back to you as a descendant of people who were buried here in pauper's graves.''

That special guest was President Ronald Reagan and that first Speaker's Luncheon was arranged to try to ease tensions between the two leaders, who embodied very different political traditions, but who shared a love of Ireland and of their Irish heritage.

The plan worked. While Ronald Reagan and Tip O'Neill never did see eye-to-eye on politics, they formed a respectful relationship that enabled them to work together in America's interest. So I ask our Republican friends: Let us walk in the footsteps of Ronald Reagan and Tip O'Neill and work together to pass the Irish E3 visa bill this year.

60TH NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator PRYOR and myself, I ask unanimous consent that the transcript of the 60th Annual National Prayer Breakfast be printed in the RECORD.

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

Senator MARK PRYOR: Good morning. Thank you all for being here. It's great to have you here. I want to thank all of you for making your way to this very special event in the life of our country and our world. We invited you, and you came, and we appreciate it. When I say ''we'' I mean co-chair JEFF SESSIONS of Alabama and many of the members of the U.S. Congress who are the real life hosts of this breakfast this morning. On behalf of all of us, the House and the Senate members, we certainly want to say thank you for joining us here this morning and thank you for praying and for building friendships and to try to make this a better world.

Senator JEFF SESSIONS: As with all our Prayer Breakfasts over the last six decades, we are gathering in the Spirit of Jesus of Nazareth. He was open, curious, compassionate, inclusive and humble—a good example for all of us in public life and for all of us living anywhere for that matter. He was loving, in a word, and that is the way to describe the spirit in which we attempt to gather in today.

Senator PRYOR: Let us just join together in the spirit of reverent prayer: God of the universe and of each and every one of us, we welcome your presence, your truth and your love to our event. Bless us we pray with the change of heart and change of mind we all need today. We love you and we want to draw near to you this morning.

Senator SESSIONS: In the spirit of love, I pray that everything we do and say from this head table and from around each table would be pleasing to you. Thank you for the good food and fellowship we enjoy at this breakfast and may your Spirit fill this great hall, Amen.

MARK and I and many, many others have been working on, and praying for, this remarkable breakfast for months now and we are all excited to share it with you. I think we have all had two different experiences of what can happen when we bring faith into the world of government and business. Sometimes it creates conflict and when we look at our planet's history, even wars. But at other times, more often really, true faith can be a reconciling force of amazing power, a power that can make an entire society better. As Ambassador Andrew Young said last night at the Southeastern dinner, the civil rights movement, the non-violent movement that overcame bigotry and hatred in a way that could not have been done any other way, was done in the Spirit of Jesus.

We all have somewhat different religious histories. In my faith walk as I studied the life of Jesus, it seems His approach was always to see the people who are considered to be outsiders, or who had withdrawn, He tried to bring them all in. All those lepers, Samaritans and disabled people and poor people and folks like the woman at the well—they had been pushed out, or had withdrawn, but Jesus brought them in. I think that is the kind of approach we want to embrace in this breakfast and everything that flows out of it. We want to bring everyone in and to be in harmony with God's will and to share in God's love.

Senator PRYOR: Senators have been meeting in a breakfast group for over six decades now. As friends, we gather to pray every Wednesday when the Senate is in session. To give you a picture of how long that group has been in existence, the Senate breakfast group has met about one time for every person in this room. We come together to pray for each other and work for the Senate and of course for the country. Once a year we invite you all into the fellowship together to pray for world leaders and especially for our President.

Some of you have heard that things can be better in Congress and that is true. I think a good place to start would be to remember just a few simple, yet powerful words. Love one another as I have loved you. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. We don't need a constitutional amendment or some big Congressional reform, we just need to start acting better and Jesus gives us the place to start. It's simple but it's hard. We need to love and pray for people who disagree with us. We hope you will be loving and be praying for us and with us this morning in this special time today and when you return home.

I have a letter from a very special friend of ours and he writes to the folks who are attending the National Prayer Breakfast.

Letter from Rev. Billy Graham read by Senator PRYOR:

I want to convey my personal greetings to each of you assembled this morning for the National Prayer Breakfast. I miss being with you all, having been a part of this annual event sponsored by the House and Senate prayer group since the very beginning, often as a speaker. Though age and health prevent me from being there in person, I am with you in spirit and you are in my heart.

I want to say a special word of encouragement to the many friends meeting today from across the country and across the world, especially President Obama and his wife Michelle and Vice President JOSEPH

BIDEN and his wife Jill for whom I pray every day as the Scriptures command us to do. The National Prayer Breakfast is one of the most amazing gatherings as people from most of the nations of the world, representing every race, color, creed, religion and political affiliation, or none, come together in the name of Jesus to focus on his teachings and follow his example of how to live and love each other.

Throughout my ministry spanning more than 60 years, I have tried to lift up the name of Jesus to audiences and individuals in many of the countries you represent today against the backdrop of polarization in our nation this election year and the tensions across the globe due to war, disease, poverty and other problems. I pray that foundation of unity you embody around the person of Jesus may be an example to the world and a catalyst for peace, freedom and reconciliation as each of us discovers in our own hearts the love and forgiveness He offers to those who seek and turn to him in repentance and faith. May God richly bless your time of fellowship and inspiration this morning. And may the Lord give each of you a special sense of the Spirit as you pray together and pray in Jesus' name, signed Billy Graham.

Senator SESSIONS: Jesus said that if we had faith as small as a mustard seed, we could move mountains. We experience a similar miracle when we hear the size of the voice that comes out of the relatively small body of our singer, Jackie Evancho. She is eleven. God has given her an extraordinary gift and we are thrilled she is here to share it with us. Please welcome Jackie Evancho.

Song ''To Believe'', sung by Miss Jackie Evancho

Senator PRYOR: Wow, thank you Jackie. That was phenomenal. Thank you so much. We have quite the head table here. We have the runner up to America's Got Talent, the winner of the Heisman Trophy, the winner of the Nobel Prize and the most powerful woman in American history, so thank you all for being here.

Senator SESSIONS: Pretty impressive but when we come before God, all the fancy titles are brought down and the humble regular people are raised up. We are all equally of value before our Creator. Allow me to introduce some of our presenters who will come to the podium when their turn arises. As a Senator representing the national champion Alabama—I never get tired of slipping that in—I get to introduce the football player. We are proud to have a Baylor Bear with us, Mr. Robert Griffin III, RG3, the winner of the 2011 Heisman Trophy. He excelled at finishing drives and games so we have asked him to do our closing prayer.

We always honor our nation's military each year by asking one of their own to be a part of the program. Today we are proud to have Colonel Kelly Martin, an active duty Air Force officer who serves in the operations directorate of the Joint Staff at the Pentagon. During her career as a pilot, she did countless in-flight refueling, so she knows a thing or two about prayer. She will lead us in a prayer for American national leaders.

Next is Congressman and Dr. PAUL BROUN from Georgia. Both he and Congressman MCINTYRE lead the House breakfast group. Every ship has an anchor and in our Senate breakfast prayer group, Senator DANIEL AKAKA of Hawaii has been our anchor for many years. We are going to miss him when he retires. We have asked him to say our prayer for world leaders. I have not known anyone, from Alabama or elsewhere, who has better lived their life in the Spirit of Jesus than has DANNY AKAKA. DANNY, thank you for all you do to make the Senate and our government and nation a better place.

We are also joined by our colleague, Dr. TOM COBURN who passionately represents the people of Oklahoma and the Senate. He will give us a reading from the Scriptures. If you know TOM, you know that his faith impacts his life, and we all know that. Next, I have the honor and privilege of introducing my wife, Mrs. Mary Sessions, my partner for 42 years who has enabled me to be able to serve, and has provided us with three children and five grandchildren.

We are very grateful once again to welcome the First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama. None of us can even imagine the burdens that you carry as the spouse and the leader of our nation. We thank you and pray for you and honor your work on the behalf of the health of our nation's children and all Americans.

Senator PRYOR: Mr. President, did you hear the little thing about the national championship? This year it was Alabama, last year it was Auburn, it never stops. You see what I have to put up with?

What most people don't fully realize is that the government is a team sport. We are all thankful to have our tireless and passionate Vice President running all over the country and all over the world to accomplish our country's most important work, Vice President JOE BIDEN.

The next person I want to introduce is my wife, Jill Pryor, the best person in the world.

You have already met Jackie Evancho. She is going to sing one more song in a few minutes but I think after that she has to leave here and go study for a spelling test. Sitting next to her is her mother, the proudest mother in the room, Mrs. Lisa Evancho. Thank you both for being here.

Shortly we are going to hear a greeting from our counterparts who lead the House prayer breakfast group. They make those of us at the head table feel extra safe because one is a doctor and the other is a black belt in Tae Kwando. One kind of tears you up and one tears you down, namely Congressman MACINTYRE of North Carolina and Congressman BROUN of Georgia. Thank you for being here.

One of the people in the room who needs no introduction is Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI. We thank her for her inspiring service to the country and her support for the prayer breakfast over the years. We look forward to the Scripture that she is about to read. Madam Leader.

Representative NANCY PELOSI: Thank you very much to Senator PRYOR for the invitation to read from the Holy Scriptures this morning. Let us all be grateful for the fellowship that brings us all together with our President of the United States and the First Lady, the Vice President—who said after Jackie finished singing, ''now I know how the angels sound, so beautiful''—the fellowship that brings us together as colleagues, our international guests and of course most of all our men and women in uniform who give us the opportunity to exercise freely our faith.

I am honored for the opportunity to read from the Holy Scriptures, from the Old Testament. When I was asked by Senator PRYOR to do so, I went right to Solomon. We all know over the ages that King Solomon has been recognized for his great wisdom, but it is really important to note that his wisdom sprang from humility, and that must be our prayer. Solomon's prayer is heralded in at least two books of the Bible, the Second Book of Chronicles and the First Book of Kings. A reading from the First Book of Kings:

God appeared to Solomon in a dream during the night. God said, ''ask what you would like me to give to you.'' Solomon replied, ''You showed most faithful love to your servant David, my father. When he lived his life before you in faithfulness and uprightness and in integrity of heart, you have continued this most faithful love to him by allowing his son to sit on the throne today. Now my God, you have made me your servant king in succession to David, my father.

''But I am a very young man, unskilled in leadership and here is your servant surrounded by your people whom you have chosen, of people so numerous that its number cannot be counted or reckoned.'' So Solomon said, ''give your servant a heart to understand how to govern your people, how to discern between good and evil, for how could one otherwise govern such a great people as yours?'' It pleased God that Solomon should have asked for this. ''Since you have asked for this,'' God said, ''and not asked for long life for yourself or riches or vengeance upon your enemies, but have asked for discerning judgment for yourself here and now, I do what you ask. I give you wisdom and understanding as no one has ever had before and no one will have after you.'' The whole world sought audience with Solomon to know the wisdom God had put in his heart.

May our message from this reading be that we have the humility to ask God for what pleases him so that we can do his work. Amen.

Representative PAUL BROUN: Good morning. I am Dr. PAUL BROUN. I am a physician and a Representative from the 10th Congressional District in Georgia, and a Republican. And this is my friend, MIKE MCINTYRE. As Senator PRYOR just told you, he is a black belt so I am going to be careful with what I am going to say about him. He is a Democrat, a blue dog Democrat, who represents North Carolina.

I am also a member of the Gideons, so if you didn't have a Bible in your hotel room, please let me know and we will be sure to get you one. In fact, I am a Gideon because it was a Gideon Bible that led me to the Lord. I accepted Him as my Lord and Savior some time ago. We thank you for coming to the breakfast today, especially our honored guests from all around the world. We are up here to bring greetings from our weekly Congressional House breakfast group and to give you a bit of a sense of what goes on there.

We pray, we study the Scriptures, we share our family struggles and needs and our personal needs. We even try to sing sometimes. We call it the best hour of the week because it absolutely is. It is where Democrats and Republicans can come together, put politics aside, put partisanship aside. And we are just personal friends, brothers and sisters in Christ. And we worship our God together.

Over 25 years ago Jesus Christ changed my life when I accepted him as my personal Lord and Savior. He gave me not only a personal peace but he gave me a purpose in my life to serve him and to live for him. There is no rule that says I have to check my faith when I go through the doors of the House chambers. I could not do that if I wanted to. I am always eager to talk about what God has done for me and in my life and how he has changed me, how he saved me and made me a child of God. I am thankful for our House group. The people who founded the United States were people who prayed, they knew the Scriptures. It is good for the whole nation to follow their example in honoring the God that created each and every one of us and his Son who died for us all.

Representative MIKE MCINTYRE: Thank you Paul. I am MIKE MCINTYRE. Serving in Congress is a great privilege but it is also a tremendous challenge. I am very thankful that I get to meet with my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to come together in our breakfast group where we can share heart to heart.

Washington, D.C. usually focuses just on the surface, on the labels and where you come from and who you are supposed to be identified with. Our weekly group allows us to go deeper and to build friendships. I also want to tell you about a new tradition. During the first vote of each week on Monday or Tuesday night, depending on when we go into session, several House members step across the hall in room 219 and leave labels at the door and pray like Solomon of the Old Testament for wisdom for that week so that we will make the right decisions.

When I am back in my district, I often have people come up to me and express concerns or complain about Washington, D.C. Can you imagine that? They will go on for 30 minutes and usually after I have listened carefully to all that they are saying, I will say: ''Would you pray for us that we will make the right decisions; if it's that important to you or to your family or to your business or to your school or our country, would you take the time to pray for us that we will make the right decision?'' I have never had anybody refuse to do that when I have asked them. Like Nehemiah in the Old Testament, we want to build a wall of prayer around our nation's capital. You can put a stone or a brick in that wall of prayer if you would take five minutes each week to join us in prayer, and you could choose the time. If you go to the Congressional Prayer Caucus' website and say, ''You know what, Mike, I will pray for you and for our President and all our leaders at all levels of government.'' It is that important. Because you see, the true source of power is not found in the halls of Congress or in the Oval Office of the West Wing or in the chambers of the Supreme Court. It is found when we are on our knees before the throne of grace, before all mighty God asking for his help. Would you please join us in that effort? That is something you can do that would go beyond today. I think you will agree that our country is worth it. God bless you all and thank you very much.

Colonel Kelly Martin, U.S.A.F.: Please join me now in a prayer for our national leaders. Lord, it is with a humble heart that we come before you today and ask for a special measure of grace and wisdom to be given to the men and women who lead our nation. For you know that it is the fear of the Lord that is the beginning of wisdom and understanding. And it is by your grace and love that you arm us with the strength and guide our steps towards what is perfect. Leadership is not easy and good leadership is rare and of great value, but great leadership comes only from you. Throughout our nation's history, you have blessed us with a legacy of leaders who served with excellence and we are grateful that this blessing continues today. Thank you for each and every one of our leaders and their willingness to serve our nation, its' people, and, ultimately, to serve you. I ask that in the heat of battle, you give our leaders clarity of mind and the courage to make right decisions especially when it is not convenient or expedient. Give them the faith to always seek you, a hope that will always sustain them and, most importantly, give them a love that will unite them. We ask that you bless our leaders, protect and watch over them, give them a peace that passes understanding; bless their families and continue to bless the United States of America. I pray this in your Son's name, amen.

Senator TOM COBURN: Good morning. I have the privilege of reading from the New Testament Scriptures. The passage that I want to read today has to do with the most powerful force the world has ever known, love. In this room, we have people from well over 100 different countries, all colors, all aspects of faith and maybe from a few different points of view.

Jesus said to him, ''you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind.'' This is the first and the greatest commandment and the second is like it, that you should love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang the law and the prophets. A new commandment I give to you that you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another. This is my commandment to you that you love one another as I have loved you, greater love has no one than this than to lay down ones life for his friends.

The power of love is manifested in the subtleness and the happiness of our heart because as we give love and sacrificial love, that is the only way, our lives are truly fulfilled, by giving away our life. We have great examples of that in our military, in our leaders as they sacrifice their life and time and families, but the fact is, we are commanded to do that. May God bless the reading of his Word.

Senator DANIEL AKAKA: Let me add my aloha and welcome to all of you gathered here at the 60th National Prayer Breakfast. Let us pray. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are filled with your glory. We come to you to pray for world leaders. Give them your wisdom to deal with the challenging problems of our time; may your Spirit rest upon them as they seek to empower people to lead quiet and peaceful lives in all Godliness and honesty. Send out your light and lead our world leaders with your truth. Bring them through strife and warfare to lasting peace, uniting them for the glory of your name. As they put aside selfish ambition, make them instruments of your will to carry out your purposes in our world. We pray this in your sovereign name, amen.

Senator PRYOR: When we take the long view of history, it is pretty clear that ideas are more powerful than money or guns or even governments. So if we follow that logic, ideas about God would be the most powerful of all. One of the most precious resources of the community of faith are those women and men who help us think deeply and clearly about God, about truth and about responsibility. Eric Metaxas has been a friend of this breakfast for many years, so let that be a warning to all of you, if you come too often, we may ask you to speak. He has written two New York Times best sellers, 30 children's books, has been part of the Veggie Tale series, and he has also debated the existence of God in academic settings all over the world. I first became aware of him through his book, ''Amazing Grace,'' about William Wilberforce whose life makes a great guide book for anyone who is serving in government. I just finished another book of his, about another great public role model, ''Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy''. Ladies and gentlemen, Eric Metaxas.

Mr. Eric Metaxas: Good morning to all of you, honored guests from around the world, from this great nation, mostly to our President and First Lady. What an honor to be here. Now, I have to ask, I want to know how many people are here if you don't mind, just indulge me, would you raise your hand if you are here and I just want to get a quick . . . okay, well that was four. All right, well they said four thousand.

Let me just say up front, I am not a morning person but it is nonetheless an honor to speak at this august extraordinarily early gathering. I know it is an august gathering because they charged 175 dollars for breakfast. I don't want to start out by being negative but I think there may be some kind of money laundering thing kind of happening here. I am speaking truth to power people, the price gauging, it needs to stop. Even as a member of the elite one per cent, I cannot afford this.

We joke, but I know who puts this event on. They are a highly secret, indeed a nefarious organization. They call themselves ''the family.'' You see, the family not only runs this event, they run everything that is happening in the world. We, and of course I mean the President and I most specifically, are all their puppets. The President knows what I mean. He cannot admit this publicly, obviously, but appearing here this morning we are simply doing their bidding. Every U.S. President has been elected by them except for Warren G. Harding. No one knows how Warren Harding was able to buck that trend but we know that he paid dearly for it, most notably by being saddled with the name Warren G. Harding.

I am not a politician so when I see a dais like this, I immediately think of those wonderful Dean Martin roasts from the 70's. That was my favorite show next to Sanford and Son. I am being honest with you now and forgive me if I pretend that I am up here with Ruth Buzzi, Bob Hope, Jimmy Stewart, Red Buttons, Charlie Callas, Foster Brooks and Rich Little. I am being honest, that is who I wish were up here. And to those of you who are actually up here, I apologize from the bottom of Don Rickles' heart, I am sorry.

Okay, it is a National Prayer Breakfast, maybe we should get serious and say something about prayer . . . nah. Okay, seriously though, what is prayer? The real question is what is prayer? Prayer is real faith in God, it is not phony religiosity. It is not, 'oh wouldst thou who art sovereign of the universe take this arcane verbiage as evidence that we believe that thou art an old fashioned and unpleasant and easily annoyed and even cranky deity, and that to get thy magnificent attention and so as not to annoy thee, we must needs employ wooden and archaic and religious sounding language.'

That, my friends, is not prayer. That is, to use the current terminology, a lot of pious baloney. Who said that, I believe it was NANCY PELOSI? It was someone on the couch, but I can't remember. But the point is, pious baloney is not prayer, it is not faith in the God of Scripture. Imagine talking to Jesus that way—he would almost laugh at you. Imagine if we talked to him that way. Prayer is from the heart. We don't try to fool God with phony religiosity. Adam and Eve tried that with a fig leaf once that did not go so well.

And this gets to my theme this morning—the difference between religion or religiosity and real faith in God. We all know people who go to church but who do not show the love of Jesus. We know people who know Scripture but sometimes use it as a weapon. Real prayer and real faith is not religious, it is from the heart. It is honest, it is real. I have had the privilege of writing about two men, Wilberforce and Bonhoeffer, whose lives illustrate the difference between what mere religiosity and actually knowing what serving God is. Let me first quickly tell you personally how I came to see the difference between these two utterly different things.

First of all, I am the son of European immigrants who met in an English class in New York City in 1956. And I thank the Lord that my parents are in the room this morning. My dad is Greek, hence my surname, Metaxas. My mom is German, hence my deep love for Siegfried and Roy. Now, when you have one Greek parent, you are raised Greek, forget about the German stuff. Greeks believe that being Greek is the most important thing in the world. Now I am 50 per cent Greek but I have always tried to be more than 50 per cent Greek but I have never been able to break the fifty per cent barrier, a little bit like brother Mitt.

I grew up of course in the Greek Orthodox Church. I was an altar boy and had a modicum of faith, a mostly nominal, cultural faith. I thought of myself as a Christian but then I went to Yale University. Of course, it is the dream come true for every son of working class European immigrants. But the reality is that Yale, and most of our other universities but especially Yale, is a very secular place, aggressively secular. What little modicum of faith I had was seriously challenged. The idea of God really is ignored or even sneered at. By the time I graduated I was quite sure that it was wrong to be serious about the Bible or to take Jesus seriously, that it was hopelessly parochial and divisive. I was not sure what was supposed to replace it but I was confused. I guess I was lost. I wanted to be a writer. I was not terribly successful. I floundered and then I drifted, then I floundered some more, then I drifted and floundered together, which you think is easy.

Eventually things got so bad I moved back in with my parents, which I do not recommend. I specifically do not recommend moving in with my parents. I joke, but it was in fact a very tough time for me. I am being serious now. I suffered then, during that period, from real, genuine depression. I still struggle with that. This was a very painful, soul searching time in my life. I took a really depressing job which my parents forced me to take, thank you very much. And while I was at this job, this miserable job, thank you mom and dad, I met a man of some faith. And he begins to share his faith with me, this secular Yale agnostic, and I was in enough pain that I was willing to listen a little bit to what he had to say. He was an Episcopalian and I figured it was safe—they don't really believe that stuff anyway. So I said ''yeah, you can keep talking.'' But he turned out to be one those Episcopalians who actually believed this stuff and knew the Bible backwards and forwards and I was really challenged. We would have a lot of conversations.

I was not ready to accept what he was saying, not ready to pray, to attend a Bible study, to go to church or to become a weird born again Christian. But I was in enough pain to keep listening. This friend of mine said to me that I should pray that God would reveal himself to me—which seemed absurd because I thought: I don't know if he's there so I don't really want to pray to the oxygen in the room, to whom shall I pray if he is not there? It is a conundrum you see. But sometimes when you are in enough pain, and I was, you do silly things—and I did pray. And I said, in my anguish, and it was very real anguish. I said, ''God if you are there, please reveal yourself to me; punch a hole through the sheetrock, wave to me, say hello, show yourself to me.'' I was desperate. Every now and again I would pray that prayer, I would be jogging and I would pray that prayer, ''God help me, I need help.'' It was an honest prayer. And prayers come from a place of honesty, not religiosity. If you can say ''help me Lord,'' God hears that prayer.

Then one night during this time, around my 25th birthday, I had a dream. We don't have time to go into it this morning but it was an amazing dream. If you want to hear the story of this amazing dream you can go to my website: EricMetaxas.com. It is an amazing thing and it changed my life. God came into my life, Jesus came into my life, and it is all true except the part about the UFO and the Sasquatch which I made up. But seriously, watch that if you don't mind because it really happened, it is not made up.

And when God came into my life overnight and He answered that prayer, I wondered why hadn't I heard this before? Why did I have to suffer not knowing? Why? I think part of the reason is that I had rejected a phony religious idea of God. Not God as he really is because when I encountered God as he really is, I knew that is what my heart is longing for. That is the answer. He is the answer to my pain and all my questions. He is real and He loves me despite everything I have done. He is not some moral code. He is not some energy force. He is alive. He is a person. He knows everything about me and about you. He knows my story; He knows your story, every detail. He knows your deepest fears. He knows the terrible selfish things you have done that have hurt others and He still loves you. And He knows the hurt that others have caused you. He knows us. He is alive. He is not a joy killing bummer or some moralistic church lady. He is the most wonderful person, capital ''P'', imaginable. In fact, his name is Wonderful. Now, who would reject that?

So at that point, I realized everything I rejected about God was actually not God. It was just dead religion. It was phoniness. It was people who go to church and do not show the love of Jesus. It was people who know the Bible and use it as a weapon, people who do not practice what they preach, people who are indifferent to the poor and suffering, people, who use religion as a way to exclude others from their group, people who use religion as a way to judge others. I had rejected that, but guess what? Jesus had also rejected that. He had railed against that and called people to real life and to real faith. Jesus was and is the enemy of dead religion. Jesus came to deliver us from that. He railed against the religious leaders of his day because he knew that it was all just a front, that in their hearts they were far from God his Father. When he was tempted in the desert, who was the one throwing Bible verses at him? Satan. That is a perfect picture of dead religion. Using the words of God to do the opposite of what God does. It is grotesque when you think about it. It is demonic.

That summer as I came to faith, the guy who shared his faith with me, Ed Tuttle, gave me a copy of ''The Cost of Discipleship'' by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. And he asked me if I had ever heard of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I said, ''no.'' He said, ''Bonhoeffer was a pastor who because of his faith in Jesus stood up for the Jews of Europe.'' I was shocked. My mother is German. She grew up during this period. Why had I never heard this amazing story about Bonhoeffer before? I remember thinking somebody really ought to write a book about Bonhoeffer.

I was not interested in writing biographies. I am far too self-centered to spend that much time focusing on someone besides myself. I went on to have a strange career writing children's books, I wrote humor for the New York Times, I worked for Veggie Tales. And then I wanted to share my faith and I wrote a book with the ridiculous title ''Everything You Always Wanted to Know about God but Were Afraid to Ask''. Actually now it's a trilogy, three books. And one day I found myself being interviewed on CNN about this book and I was expecting one of those tough questions like, how can a good God allow evil and suffering? But instead, I got a softball question. The host on CNN said to me, ''you know there is something here about Wilberforce''—and I had two sentences in the book about Wilberforce—''Can you talk about that?'' Suddenly I am on CNN being asked to talk about Wilberforce. All I knew about Wilberforce was in the book—that he was someone who took the Bible so seriously that he changed the world forever.

So I start talking about him briefly and next thing I know a publisher calls me up and says ''there's a movie coming out called 'Amazing Grace'.'' And I was asked to write a book about Wilberforce. Amazingly, I wrote a biography about Wilberforce and everywhere I go talking about Wilberforce people would say to me, ''who are you going to write about next? Who are you going to write about next?'' Some people asked me about ''whom will you next write?'' As a Yale English major, I want to recommend the word whom. If English is your first language, you may want to use the word whom. You can get it free as an app on your iPhone, you just download it. You use it as much as you want. ''Eric, about whom will you next write?'' And I thought well, there is only one person besides Wilberforce, only one about whom I would write if I were to write a second biography. I remembered Bonhoeffer and I did write that book. And I have to tell you, nobody is more shocked by the reception of the book than I. No one is more grateful to the Lord for the people who are reading and talking about this book. I know that it was read even by President George W. Bush who is intellectually incurious as we have all read. He read the book. No pressure. [Hands President Obama a book.] I just want to say no pressure. I know you are very busy, Mr. President, but I know sometimes you take plane rides and you have got time to kill, so here. [Hands President Obama another book.] No pressure. No pressure at all. Who am I to pressure you?

Nonetheless, the lives of both of these men illustrate the difference between phony religiosity and really believing in God in a way that is real—that changes your life, that must change your life, and the lives of others. Wilberforce is best known for leading the movement to end the slave trade. Now, why did he take that on? Do you know why? I am here to tell you it is not because he was just a churchgoer, because there were plenty of churchgoers in England in the day of Wilberforce. And everybody in that day seemed to have no problem with the slave trade or slavery, people who went to church. The reason Wilberforce fought so hard was because around his 26th birthday, he encountered Jesus. England paid lip service to religion in those days. Everybody said ''I am a Christian, I am English, yeah, we are Christians.'' But they really seemed to think—most of them—that the slave trade was a fine thing. So keep in mind that when someone says, ''I am a Christian'', it might mean absolutely nothing. But for Wilberforce it became real. It was not about Christianity, it was about the living God and serving Him. And Wilberforce suddenly took the Bible seriously—that all of us are created in the image of God. He took this idea seriously—that it was our duty to care for the least of these. And he said, ''Lord, I will obey.''

Now he fought politically, he fought hard and you know the only people really fighting with him at this point were the fanatical Christians. Did you know that? All the churchgoers, all the religious people, they were not alongside him. Who was alongside him in those days? The born again nuts, the Quakers, the Methodists that people made fun of. They were in the trenches because they knew they had no choice but to regard the Africans as made in the image of God and worthy of our love and respect. Everyone else was just going with the flow, all the people who just went to church. As I say, they got it wrong. They had not seen Jesus.

Wilberforce took these ideas, these foreign ideas, from the Bible and brought them into culture. You can read about it, and not just in my book, which the President may read. But you can read about it. This is historical fact. This is not my spin, this is true. Wilberforce, because he believed what the Bible said and because he obeyed what God told him to do, changed the world.

Today we argue about how to help the poor. Some say, ''Oh, the public sector, government, is the answer.'' Others say, ''The

private sector, free enterprise.'' But today, we argue about how to help the poor, not whether to help the poor. Praise the Lord. The idea to care for the poor, the idea that slavery is wrong; these ideas are not normal human ideas. These are Biblical ideas imported by Wilberforce at a crucial time.

Human beings do not do the right thing apart from God's intervention. We always do the phony religious thing. We go with the flow. In Wilberforce's day going with the flow meant supporting slavery, that Africans are not fully human. In Bonhoeffer's world, in Nazi Germany, it meant supporting the idea that Jews are not fully human. So whom do we say is not fully human today? Who is expendable to us? My mother lived through this. There are people in this room who lived through this. I was in Germany last week; I met people who lived through this period. It was an extraordinary thing to be there, to meet people who were the sons of heroes fighting against Hitler. This was a moment ago that this horror happened.

Bonhoeffer was born in 1906 and he was born into an amazing family. His father was the most famous psychiatrist in Germany. This was a big, important amazing family. At 14, he announces he wants to be a theologian. He got his doctorate at age 21. Bonheoffer was a great theologian but he decided in the midst of being a great theologian that he wanted to get ordained as a Lutheran pastor. And then one day at age 24, he went to America to spend a year in New York City. And he went to study at Union Theological Seminary. One Sunday a fellow student named Frank Fisher, an African American from Alabama, invited Dietrich Bonhoeffer to Harlem to a church called Abyssinian Baptist Church. He said, ''why don't you come with me?'' And Bonheoffer went with him and for the first time in his life, in that church, he saw something that was clearly not mere phony religion. He saw people worshiping a living God. He saw people who understood suffering and whose worship was real. Bonhoeffer said that in New York, in America, he did not hear the gospel proclaimed. Think about this, he visited many, many churches, yet he did not hear the gospel proclaimed except, in his words, in the Negro churches. That was the only place he saw the true gospel. He saw true faith, living faith, people living it, preaching the gospel of Jesus, living the gospel of Jesus. He saw this among the suffering in Harlem and it changed his life.

When he got back to Germany, people could see that he was different. He was not intellectually different, but his heart had been changed. He began to speak publicly about the Bible as the word of God, the living word of God through which God who is alive wishes to speak to us. So, he understood from the black church in Harlem the idea of a personal faith, that God is alive and wishes to speak to you. And it had a political component because it is now 1932, the Nazis are rising. Bonhoeffer begins to say things that you would not hear in Germany, even in the churches in those days. He spoke of Jesus as the man for others. He said ''whoever does not stand up for the Jews has no right to sing Gregorian chants, God is not fooled.'' His whole life was about this idea that you have to have a living relationship with God and that it must lead you to action—that you must obey God, that you will look different.

Now of course dead religion demonizes others, I just said that, and apart from God's intervention, that is what we do. So don't think that you won't do that. You will do that. We are broken, fallen human beings so apart from God—that is what we do. Do you think that you are better than the Germans in that era? You are not. Not in God's eyes you're not. We are the same. We are capable of the same horrible things. Wilberforce somehow saw what the people in his day did not see, and we celebrate him for it. Bonhoeffer saw what others did not see, and we celebrate him for it. Now how did they see what they saw? There is just one word that will answer that, it is Jesus. He opens our eyes to his ideas which are radical and which are different from our own. Personally, I would say the same thing about the unborn. That apart from God we cannot see that they are persons as well so those of us who know the unborn to be human beings are commanded by God to love those who do not yet see that.

We need to know that apart from God we would be on the other side of that divide fighting for what we believe is right. We cannot demonize our enemies. Today, if you believe that abortion is wrong, you must treat those on the other side with the love of Jesus. Today, if you have a Biblical view of sexuality, you will be demonized by those on the other side who will call you a bigot. Jesus commands us to love those who call us bigots; to show them the love of Jesus. If you want people to treat you with dignity, treat them with dignity.

So finally, Jesus tells us that we must love our enemies. That, my friends, is the real difference between dead religion and a living faith in the God of the Scriptures, whether we can love our enemies. Wilberforce had political enemies but he knew that God had commanded him to treat them with civility. He knew that he had been saved by grace. He was not morally superior to the people on the other side of the aisle. Martin Luther King told the people on the buses that you must not fight back, that you must be willing to turn the other cheek or get off the bus. Branch Rickey told Jackie Robinson that if you want to win the battle, you need to do as Jesus commanded and to be strong enough to not fight back; that is how your enemies will know that there is someone, capital ''S'', standing behind you, that it is not just you.

So if you can see Jesus in your enemy, then you can know that you are seeing with God's eyes and not your own. So, can you love your enemy? If you cannot pray for those on the other side, if you cannot actually feel the love of God for your enemies, political and otherwise, my friends, that is a sure sign that you are being merely religious. That you have bought into a moral system but you do not know the God who has forgiven you. Only God can give us that supernatural agape love for those with whom we disagree. That is the test. It is an impossible standard apart from the grace of God. We all fail that test. But thank God for the grace of God. The grace of God is real. God wants to shed it abroad in every heart, not just on some, on every heart. It is the only thing , the grace of a living God, that can bring left and right together to do the right thing.

So can we humble ourselves enough to actually ask him in a real prayer to show himself to us, to lead us to do what is right? Can we do that for our country? For the world? This is a Bonhoeffer moment. If we will humble ourselves, ask God, cry out, Cri du coeur, cry from the heart, Lord lead us, will you ask him to help you? The amazing grace of God is there for everyone. You know Jesus is not just for so called ''Christians'', Jesus is for everyone. The grace of God is for everyone. I hope you know that.

When I was 21 years old, I worked at the Boston Opera House and Garrison Keeler showed up and he gave a talk. And at the end of his talk he asked the audience if they wanted to sing. They didn't, but he made them anyway. He led them in a song called ''Amazing Grace'' and that a capella rendition has stuck with me my whole life. I thought maybe some day I will get some people to do that, not today of course. But then I thought you know, if the President can sing Al Green, then maybe you can sing with him. So we are going to try this, if it goes well I will leave with my head up. You ready? If you don't know the lyrics, pretend that you do. I want to hear harmonies.

All singing: Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now am found. Was blind but now I see.

God Bless you.

Senator SESSIONS: Thank you Eric, you have indeed blessed us. You got our attention and gave us spiritual food. Now it is my great honor to introduce the President of the United States. Mr. President, we thank you for your one hundred percent support that you have given to this prayer breakfast; being here every single year and when you were a member of the Senate with us. Mr. President, I personally want to thank you for the way you strive for the betterment of all Americans. You give your life to that. It was Abraham Lincoln who first used the phrase that we are a nation under God. If we are going to be a nation under God, then we have to recognize the precious worth of every single person. Thank you for your leadership. Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States, Barack Obama.

President Barack Obama: Well, good morning everybody. It is good to be with so many friends united in prayer. And I begin by giving all praise and honor to God for bringing us here together today.

I want to thank our co-chairs, MARK and JEFF; to my dear friend, the guy who always has my back, Vice President BIDEN. All the members of Congress and my Cabinet who are here today, all the distinguished guests who have traveled a long way to be a part of this. I am not going to be as funny as Eric but I am grateful that he shared his message with us. Michelle and I feel truly blessed to be here.

This is my fourth year coming to this prayer breakfast as President. As JEFF mentioned, before that I came as senator. I have to say, it is easier coming as President. I don't have to get here quite as early. But it has always been an opportunity that I have cherished. And it is a chance to step back for a moment, for us to come together as brothers and sisters and seek God's face together. At a time when it is easy to lose ourselves in the rush and clamor of our own lives, or get caught up in the noise and rancor that too often passes as politics today, these moments of prayer slow us down. They humble us. They remind us that no matter how much responsibility we have, how fancy our titles, how much power we think we hold, we are imperfect vessels. We can all benefit from turning to our Creator, listening to Him, avoiding phony religiosity and listening to Him.

This is especially important right now, when we are facing some big challenges as a nation. Our economy is making progress as we recover from the worst crisis in three generations, but far too many families are still struggling to find work or make the mortgage, pay for college, or, in some cases, even buy food. Our men and women in uniform have made us safer and more secure, and we are eternally grateful to them, but war and suffering and hardship still remain in too many corners of the globe. And a lot of those men and women who we celebrate on Veteran's Day and Memorial Day come back and find that, when it comes to finding a job or getting the kind of care that they need, we are not always there the way that we need to be.

It is absolutely true that meeting these challenges requires sound decision-making, requires smart policies. We know that part of living in a pluralistic society means that our personal religious beliefs alone cannot dictate our response to every challenge we face.

But in my moments of prayer, I am reminded that faith and values play an enormous role in motivating us to solve some of our most urgent problems, in keeping us going when we suffer setbacks, and opening our minds and our hearts to the needs of others.

We cannot leave our values at the door. If we leave our values at the door, we abandon much of the moral glue that has held our nation together for centuries, and allowed us to become somewhat more perfect a union. Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, Jane Addams, Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day, Abraham Heschel—the majority of great reformers in American history did their work not just because it was sound policy, or they had done good analysis, or understood how to exercise good politics, but because their faith and their values dictated it, and called for bold action—sometimes in the face of indifference, sometimes in the face of resistance.

This is no different today for millions of Americans, and it is certainly not for me.

I wake up each morning and I say a brief prayer, and I spend a little time in Scripture and devotion. And from time to time, friends of mine, some of who are here today, friends like Joel Hunter or T.D. Jakes, will come by the Oval Office, or they will call on the phone, or they will send me an email, and we will pray together, and they will pray for me and my family, and for our country.

But I don't stop there. I would be remiss if I stopped there; if my values were limited to personal moments of prayer or private conversations with pastors or friends. So, instead, I must try—imperfectly, but I must try—to make sure those values motivate me as one leader of this great nation.

And so when I talk about our financial institutions playing by the same rules as folks on Main Street, when I talk about making sure insurance companies are not discriminating against those who are already sick, or making sure that unscrupulous lenders are not taking advantage of the most vulnerable among us, I do so because I genuinely believe it will make the economy stronger for everybody. But I also do it because I know that far too many neighbors in our country have been hurt and treated unfairly over the last few years, and I believe in God's command to ''love thy neighbor as thyself.'' I know that a version of that Golden Rule is found in every major religion and every set of beliefs—from Hinduism to Islam to Judaism to the writings of Plato.

And when I talk about shared responsibility, it is because I genuinely believe that in a time when many folks are struggling, at a time when we have enormous deficits, it is hard for me to ask seniors on a fixed income, or young people with student loans, or middle-class families who can barely pay the bills to shoulder the burden alone. And I think to myself, if I am willing to give something up as someone who has been extraordinarily blessed, and give up some of the tax breaks that I enjoy, I actually think that is going to make economic sense.

But for me as a Christian, it also coincides with Jesus's teaching that ''for unto whom much is given, much shall be required.'' It mirrors the Islamic belief that those who have been blessed have an obligation to use those blessings to help others, or the Jewish doctrine of moderation and consideration for others.

When I talk about giving every American a fair shot at opportunity, it is because I believe that when a young person can afford a college education or someone who has been unemployed suddenly has a chance to retrain for a job and regain that sense of dignity and pride, and contributing to the community as well as supporting their families—that helps us all prosper.

It means maybe that research lab on the cusp of a lifesaving discovery, or the company looking for skilled workers is going to do a little bit better, and we will all do better as a consequence. It makes economic sense. But part of that belief comes from my faith in the idea that I am my brother's keeper and I am my sister's keeper; that as a country, we rise and fall together. I am not an island. I am not alone in my success. I succeed because others succeed with me.

And when I decide to stand up for foreign aid, or prevent atrocities in places like Uganda, or take on issues like human trafficking, it is not just about strengthening alliances, or promoting democratic values, or projecting American leadership around the world, although it does all those things and it will make us safer and more secure. It is also about the Biblical call to care for the least of these—for the poor, for those at the margins of our society.

To answer the responsibility we are given in Proverbs to ''speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.'' And for others, it may reflect the Jewish belief that the highest form of charity is to do our part to help others to stand on their own.

Treating others as you want to be treated; requiring much from those who have been given so much; living by the principle that we are our brother's keeper; caring for the poor and those in need. These values are old. They can be found in many denominations and many faiths, among many believers and among many non-believers. And they are values that have always made this country great—when we live up to them; when we don't just give lip service to them; when we don't just talk about them one day a year. And they are the ones that have defined my own faith journey.

And today, with as many challenges as we face, these are the values I believe we are going to have to return to in the hope that God will buttress our efforts.

Now, we can earnestly seek to see these values lived out in our politics and our policies, and we can earnestly disagree on the best way to achieve these values. In the words of C.S. Lewis, ''Christianity has not, and does not profess to have a detailed political program. It is meant for all men at all times, and the particular program which suited one place or time would not suit another.''

Our goal should not be to declare our policies as Biblical. It is God who is infallible, not us. Michelle reminds me of this often. So instead, it is our hope that people of goodwill can pursue their values and common ground and the common good as best they know how, with respect for each other. And I have to say that sometimes we talk about respect, but we don't act with respect towards each other during the course of these debates.

But each and every day, for many in this room, the Biblical injunctions are not just words, they are also deeds—every single day, in different ways, so many of you are living out your faith in service to others.

Just last month, it was inspiring to see thousands of young Christians filling the Georgia Dome at the Passion Conference, to worship the God who sets the captives free and work to end modern slavery. Since we have expanded and strengthened the White House faith-based initiative, we have partnered with Catholic Charities to help Americans who were struggling with poverty, worked with organizations like World Vision and American Jewish World Service and Islamic Relief to bring hope to those suffering around the world.

Colleges across the country have answered our Interfaith Campus Challenge, and students are joined together across religious lines in service to others. From promoting responsible fatherhood to strengthening adoption, from helping people find jobs to serving our veterans, we are linking arms with faith-based groups all across the country.

I think we all understand that these values cannot truly find voice in our politics and our policies unless they find a place in our hearts. The Bible teaches us to ''be doers of the word and not merely hearers.'' We are required to have a living, breathing, active faith in our own lives. And each of us is called on to give something of ourselves for the betterment of others—and to live the truth of our faith not just with words, but with deeds.

So even as we join the great debates of our age—how we best put people back to work, how we ensure opportunity for every child, the role of government in protecting this extraordinary planet that God has made for us, how we lessen the occasions of war—even as we debate these great issues, we must be reminded of the difference that we can make each day in our small interactions, in our personal lives.

As a loving husband, or a supportive parent, or a good neighbor, or a helpful colleague—in each of these roles, we help bring His kingdom to Earth. And as important as government policy may be in shaping our world, we are reminded that it is the cumulative acts of kindness and courage and charity and love, It is the respect that we show each other and the generosity that we share with each other that in our every day lives will somehow sustain us during these challenging times. John tells us that, ''If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.''

MARK read a letter from Billy Graham, and it took me back to one of the great honors of my life, which was visiting Reverend Graham at his mountaintop retreat in North Carolina, when I was on vacation with my family in a hotel not far away.

And I can still remember winding up the path, up a mountain to his home. Ninety-one years old at the time, facing various health challenges, he welcomed me as he would welcome a family member or a close friend. This man who had prayed great prayers that inspired a nation, this man who seemed larger than life, greeted me and was as kind and as gentle as could be.

And we had a wonderful conversation. Before I left, Reverend Graham started to pray for me, as he had prayed for so many Presidents before me. And when he finished praying, I felt the urge to pray for him. I didn't really know what to say. What do you pray for when it comes to the man who has prayed for so many? But like that verse in Romans, the Holy Spirit interceded when I didn't know quite what to say.

And so I prayed—briefly, but I prayed from the heart. I don't have the intellectual capacity or the lung capacity of some of my great preacher friends here who have prayed for a long time. But I prayed. And we ended with an embrace and a warm good-bye.

And I thought about that moment all the way down the mountain, and I have thought about it in the many days since. Because I thought about my own spiritual journey—growing up in a household that was not particularly religious; going through my own

period of doubt and confusion, finding Christ when I was not even looking for him so many years ago; possessing so many shortcomings that have been overcome by the simple grace of God. And the fact that I would ever be on top of a mountain, saying a prayer for Billy Graham—a man whose faith had changed the world and that had sustained him through triumphs and tragedies, and movements and milestones—that simple fact humbled me to my core.

I have fallen on my knees with great regularity since that moment—asking God for guidance not just in my personal life and my Christian walk, but in the life of this nation and in the values that hold us together and keep us strong. I know that He will guide us. He always has and He always will. And I pray his richest blessings on each of you in the days ahead.

Thank you very much.

Senator PRYOR: Thank you, Mr. President, for sharing your heart and your faith with us. You have a room full of people here who are praying for you and your family. God bless the President of the United States of America.

Speaking of powerful people, let's hear one more time from Jackie Evancho.

''The Lord's Prayer'' sung by Miss Jackie Evancho.

Senator SESSIONS: Thank you, Jackie, and may God's blessings continue with you. My thanks to the President, Eric, all our speakers up here this morning You have given us a lot to think about. Now it is our job to ponder these things in our hearts and to turn those good ideas into action.

Senator PRYOR: Being a part of this National Prayer Breakfast is a great privilege and now it becomes a great responsibility. I believe God is counting on you and me to love and pray where we are. Let's complain a lot less and let's pray and love a lot more so God can use us to make a better world. And now to close us in prayer is Robert Griffin III of Baylor University.

Mr. Robert Griffin, III: Before I close in prayer, I would just like to say, ''Sic em, Bears.'' And to the President, if you ever get a little tired of running the country or anything like that, a little bored, I would love to play you in basketball. It would be a friendly competition because I wouldn't want anyone to feel like I was trying to hurt you or anything, so I wouldn't dunk on you at all. This has been a really long breakfast. The longest I have ever been a part of. I guess everyone up here got the memo except for me because both of my cups are empty because I drank them. No one else drank anything and I really have to use the bathroom. So will go ahead and close this out so we can all go ahead and do that.

If you could bow your heads, please. Father God, we thank you for this day as a day you have made and we rejoice and we are glad in it. Today has truly been a great day, many great speakers and a lovely singer who has blessed all of our hearts and brought many to tears. Father God, in Jesus' name, we thank you that we could sit up here and thank you for so many different things and be here all day. But most of all, we thank you above all for having the ability to make a difference in everyone's lives and giving us the power to go out and change the world. And we thank you for your love, your grace and your mercy and as we leave today, we thank you that we take those qualities that can show the world not only with our words but with our actions. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

CONVICTION OF DHARUN RAVI

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last week, a jury in New Jersey convicted Dharun Ravi for violations of New Jersey criminal laws against bias intimidation and invasion of privacy. Mr. Ravi had used a Webcam to spy on and then publicize an intimate encounter between his college roommate, Tyler Clementi, and another man. Tragically, Mr. Clementi became so distraught that he took his own life.

Young men and women should not be bullied or shamed because of their sexual orientation. It is incumbent on every segment of society to do what we can to stop bullying in schools and in our communities. As Tyler Clementi's father said after the jury verdict was announced:

> To our college, high school and even middle school youngsters, I would say this: You're going to meet a lot of people in your lifetime. Some of these people you may not like. But just because you don't like them does not mean you have to work against them.

I can only imagine the Clementi family's grief and suffering over their loss. I applaud the efforts they are making to raise awareness about the real dangers of bullying on American campuses.

The Senate is also taking steps to address the growing problem of bullying. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of Senator CASEY's Safe Schools Improvement Act, which requires schools to establish bullying prohibition policies and would help educators identify and address any conduct based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Another bill that I support is the Student Non-Discrimination Act introduced by Senator FRANKEN, which would define harassment as a form of discrimination in our public schools. Both bills have more than 35 cosponsors and deserve full consideration by the Senate. It has been well documented that students who are paralyzed by fear of bullying cannot effectively learn. Congress should help ensure that States and schools have the tools they need to prevent or punish bullying in any form. We must do more to ensure that all students are protected and can thrive in their schools.

In the aftermath of Dharun Ravi's conviction in New Jersey, there has been some commentary on hate crimes laws generally. Some have wondered whether hate crimes laws criminalize thoughts or beliefs and have the effect of chilling free speech. Others have expressed confusion whether Mr. Ravi could have been prosecuted under our recently passed Federal hate crimes law.

As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, let me clarify the scope of Federal hate crimes statutes. First, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act protects the constitutional right of every individual to have her own thoughts and beliefs and express them in a lawful manner. The law does not prohibit or punish speech, expression, or association in any way—even hate speech. The Constitution does not permit us in Congress to prohibit the expression of an idea simply because we disagree with it.

The Matthew Shepard Act punishes physical violence, not speech. The law requires the defendant to have caused or attempted to cause bodily injury to the victim while being motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or another defined characteristic. Importantly, the defendant in a Federal hate crimes case must have acted willfully. In other words, the defendant must have voluntarily and intentionally caused bodily injury to the victim. From what we know of the Ravi case, the defendant could not have been prosecuted under the Matthew Shepard Act because Mr. Ravi did not willfully cause bodily injury to Tyler Clementi, nor did he willfully cause the victim to take his own life.

We know that the consequences of bias-motivated violence extend beyond the victim. Hate crimes instill fear in those who have no connection to the victim other than a shared characteristic such as race, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Preventing such consequences is the reason I offered the Matthew Shepard Act as an amendment to the Defense authorization bill more than 2 years ago. The law has already resulted in several Federal criminal convictions. For example, two Arkansas men were convicted after they targeted five Hispanic victims at a gas station and rammed their car off the road causing serious injuries. Two other men in New Mexico were convicted under this statute for branding a disabled Navajo man with a swastika while writing the words ''KKK'' and ''white power'' on his body.

The Ravi prosecution was brought under New Jersey's laws, which are different from our Federal hate crimes laws.

TRIBUTE TO ADMIRAL ROBERT F. WILLARD

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I rise to honor a distinguished naval officer and a true patriot. Having just passed the torch of command for U.S. Pacific Command, Admiral Robert F. Willard will hang up one last time the uniform he first donned almost four decades ago. On the eve of his retirement, it is fitting to memorialize in the annals of this chamber Admiral Willard's years of selfless service to our Nation.

A Los Angeles native, Admiral Willard graduated from the United States Naval Academy and was commissioned in 1973. After he completed flight training and qualified as a naval aviator, he served in F–14 fighter squadrons operating off of the aircraft carriers USS *Constellation*, USS *Ranger*, and USS *Kitty Hawk*. Admiral Willard's proficiency in the cockpit led to his assignment to Navy Fighter Weapons School, more commonly known as

TOPGUN, where he served as the operations and executive officer. Many may not know that Admiral Willard was the aerial coordinator for the 1986 movie Top Gun and also appeared in it as a flight instructor. Admiral Willard later commanded the famous Screaming Eagles Fighter Squadron operating off of the USS *Carl Vinson*.

In 1992, following his successful completion of nuclear power training, Admiral Willard rejoined the USS *Carl Vinson* as its executive officer. He went on to command the amphibious flagship USS *Tripoli* and the aircraft carrier USS *Abraham Lincoln*. As a flag officer, Admiral Willard twice served on the Joint Staff, was deputy and chief of staff for U.S. Pacific Fleet, commanded Carrier Group Five embarked upon the USS *Kitty Hawk*, and commanded Seventh Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan. In March 2005, Admiral Willard became the 34th Vice Chief of Naval Operations, and in May 2007, he became Commander of the United States Pacific Fleet.

On October 19, 2009, Admiral Willard was appointed as Commander, U.S. Pacific Command. He assumed command when much of our focus was still on the Middle East and North Africa, and rightly so. Conflicts there, however, in no way diminished the importance of the Asia-Pacific, where strategically important events unfolded during Admiral Willard's command. As the United States rebalances its national security strategy and realigns its forces with a greater focus on the Asia-Pacific, Admiral Willard's leadership over the last 2 years has laid a critical foundation for our security and that of our allies, now and in years to come.

Pacific Command is personally resonant with me. Between 1968 and 1972, my father held the position, then known as Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command, that Admiral Willard has just relinquished. The running joke between Admiral Willard and me has been that he was living in my father's old house. And so, of all the praise and accolades I could bestow on Admiral Willard for his service to our Nation, the best and most appropriate would be: the command undertaken by my father and other great men has been admirably served by the leadership of Admiral Willard.

Admiral Willard has always paid tribute to his spouse of 38 years Donna, who has been a tireless advocate for the men and women of the commands in which she and her husband have served, and a wonderful ambassador for the United States and the Navy. And so I extend a grateful Nation's thanks to the Willards and their children Jennifer, Bryan, and Mark for their exceptional service, best wishes for the next chapter in their life, and fair winds and following seas.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, for 50 years, the United States Senate Youth Program, USSYP, has selected 2 remarkable high school students from each State, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity program to visit our Nation's capital for an inspiring week-long immersion in the workings of the Federal government and a mirror into public service. The students that participate in the USSYP have gone on to dedicate their lives to our country, including Senator SUSAN COLLINS, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, and former presidential advisor Karl Rove.

Started in 1962 through the adoption of S. Res. 324, this program is as crucial now as it was when it was first created. The USSYP acknowledges our country's need to encourage inspired and proactive youth. It takes a stand against complacency and apathy when it comes to learning, gives students a chance to see firsthand the hard work and dedication of appointed and elected officials, and sustains and heightens their passion for helping others after the program is finished. It also aims to instill a true understanding of the democratic process ''and the vital importance of democratic decision making not only for America but for people around the world'' (S. Res. 324), creating a cadre of young ambassadors who promote representative government in their own communities.

I wish to recognize the partners of the USSYP, most especially the Hearst Foundations, and my Senate colleagues who participated in Washington Week a few weeks ago. I thank the Hearst Foundations for their generous offer to fund this program as long as the Senate keeps it alive. Also, I express my gratitude for nonprofit organizations that are innovatively addressing the deficit of civic knowledge and public responsibility in our Nation's students. For example, iCivics, a project started by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, aims to use video games and other web-based tools to engage students and teach them about our government on all levels, including the importance of participation as a citizen, the power of a vote, the checks and balances of our three branches, and our founding documents. We must continue to remain invested in the knowledge and ideals our future generations bring forth.

The USSYP understands the importance of fostering the genuine interest in public service held by our Nation's youth, and only selects high schoolers to participate who have demonstrated a commitment to their student government or local civic organizations. I hope the USSYP's strong 50 years can serve as a model for similar programs—especially to reach those who may not have the support or resources to define or act on their passion for public service. The USSYP has created an alumni fund to assist delegates, who are entering college or the work force in a low-paying, public service capacity, by providing scholarships. This great first step provides support to our young constituents who are striving to realize their dreams, but are worried about the costs involved.

I enjoyed meeting with the Connecticut delegates during the annual Senate reception during Washington Week and appreciated our thoughtful dialogue. Their visit has left me inspired and hopeful about our country's future.

I know my colleagues will join me in recognizing the importance of the United States Senate Youth program for the next 50 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

JACKSON'S SUGAR HOUSE AND VEGETABLE STAND

• Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, each year as winter makes way for spring, across my home state of Maine you will see maple trees lined with metal buckets poised to collect delectable maple syrup. Maine is the third largest producer of maple syrup in America, and last year experienced a 14 percent increase, generating a remarkable 360,000 gallons. As maple sugar season commences and Maine looks forward to celebrating the time-honored Maple Sugar Sunday, I rise to commend Jackson's Sugar House & Vegetable Stand located in Oxford, ME.

Often times a small request sparks a marvelous business enterprise. For Roger Jackson, owner of Jackson's Sugar House & Vegetable Stand, his passion for maple syrup was reignited a few years ago when his granddaughter sought help for a school project on how to make the sweet liquid. Although Roger had been producing maple syrup on and off since he was 6 years old, his granddaughter's question renewed his love for this New England staple. And the results have been incredibly sweet.

As a veteran in maple syrup production, Roger is familiar with the trials and tribulations that go along with this endeavor. While it is often hard to turn a profit as a small producer, the smiles on his customers' faces truly make it all worthwhile. Further, compared to when Roger was a child, improvements in technology have certainly enhanced and eased the process of turning sap into maple sugar. For example, today Jackson's Sugar House uses a stainless steel evaporator—equipment that enables them to easily remove water and ensure better control over the quality of their product. This evaporation process is a vast improvement over Roger's childhood maple making experiences involving boiling sap over an open flame.

Roger's expertise in maple syrup has certainly not gone unnoticed. He was recently appointed by the Maine Department of Agriculture Commissioner, Walter Whitcomb, to the Maine

Maple Task Force Study Group to represent producers of maple sugar products with 1,000 or fewer taps. This Task Force was created in May of 2011, as part of the State's legislation ''To Study the Promotion and Expansion of the Maine Maple Sugar Industry.'' Roger's participation on the task force has been instrumental in ensuring that the needs of small producers and mom and pop sugarhouse operations are vigorously advocated.

Maple syrup and all maple sugar products are certainly among the sweetest commodities produced in Maine. Thanks to the proficiency and resolve of individuals such as Roger Jackson, Maine continues to produce the highest quality maple products. I am proud to extend my congratulations to Roger Jackson and everyone at Jackson's Sugar House & Vegetable Stand for their dedication to excellence, and offer my best wishes for their continued success.●

TRIBUTE TO RACHEL BRISTOL

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize someone who has spent the last 30 years in the front ranks of the fight against hunger in my State.

Rachel Bristol, president and CEO of the Oregon Food Bank, has devoted her life to making sure that Oregonians in need are able to put nutritious food on the table. She has spent every minute of every day of her career doing everything in her power to eliminate hunger.

As Rachel retires, she leaves behind a legacy of determination and hard work that has guided the Oregon Food Bank and seen it expand into a professional organization that reflects her vision of what a community should do to help those in need.

Last year alone, the Oregon Food Bank Network distributed more than 81 million pounds of food. I am proud to say that I have stood beside the food bank's employees and volunteers and packaged my share of pancake mix or other food. So, I know firsthand how dedicated they are in making sure that no one goes to bed hungry.

Whether we call it hunger, food insecurity or something else, what we are really talking about is the tragedy of having hungry families in the richest country in the world.

Rachel saw that inequity and spent her life doing something about it. Because of that fewer people in Oregon went hungry because she gave them a place to go—a place to look to—for basic nutritious food to put on their table.

Because of Rachel Bristol, the food bank is a better organization and Oregon is a better community.

While she may be retiring, something tells me that the fight against hunger will always be a part of who she is.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:42 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. 665. An act to establish a pilot program for the expedited disposal of Federal real property.

H.R. 2087. An act to remove restrictions from a parcel of land situated in the Atlantic District, Accomack County, Virginia.

The message also announced that pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 35, 112th Congress, and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Speaker appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies: Mr. BOEHNER of Ohio, Mr. CANTOR of Virginia, and Ms. PELOSI of California.

At 4:30 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 108. Concurrent resolution permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust.

The message further announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 886) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 225th anniversary of the establishment of the Nation's first Federal law enforcement agency, the United States Marshals Service.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 665. An act to establish a pilot program for the expedited disposal of Federal real property; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2087. An act to remove restrictions from a parcel of land situated in the Atlantic District, Accomack County, Virginia; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

The following bill was read, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 306. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement to provide for management of the free-roaming wild horses in and around the Currituck National Wildlife Refuge; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following bill was discharged from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 306. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement to provide for management of the free-roaming wild horses in and around the Currituck National Wildlife Refuge; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC–5401. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2010 Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges and Transit: Conditions and Performance''; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5402. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Western Pacific Fisheries; 2012 Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures'' (RIN0648–XA674) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5403. A communication from the Acting Division Chief, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Overflight Regulations for the Channel Islands, Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones, and Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuaries'' (RIN0648–AX79) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5404. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod By Vessels Using Pot Gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XA988) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5405. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Pot Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XA992) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5406. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in

the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XA987) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5407. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Augusta S.p.A. Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–1454)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5408. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Community Development Quota Program'' (RIN0648–AV33) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5409. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Chinook Salmon Bycatch Management in the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery; Economic Data Collection'' (RIN0648–BA80) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5410. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 2 for the South Atlantic Region; Correction'' (RIN0648–BB26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5411. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Amendment 32'' (RIN0648–AY56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5412. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder Catch Limit Revisions'' (RIN0648–XA913) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 2, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5413. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (29); Amdt. No. 3461'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5414. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (82); Amdt. No. 3460'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5415. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0382)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5416. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Eclipse Aerospace, Inc. Airplanes Equipped with Pratt and Whitney Canada, Corp. PW610F-A Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0199)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5417. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Part 95 Instrument Flight Rules (4); Amdt. No. 498'' (RIN2120–AA63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5418. A communication from the Trial Attorney, Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Conductor Certification'' (RIN2130–AC36) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5419. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls Royce plc (RR) RB211–Trent 800 Series Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2010–0755)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5420. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Lycoming Engines Reciprocating Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0533)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5421. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Various Transport Category Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2010–0956)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5422. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2009–0889)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5423. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0725)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5424. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier Inc., Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–1092)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5425. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0571)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5426. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Services B.V. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–1067)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5427. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; DASSAULT AVIATION Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–1166)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5428. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–1227)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5429. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2006–25001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5430. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0994)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5431. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; 328 Support Services GmbH (Type Certificate Previously Held by AvCraft Aerospace GmbH; Fairchild Dornier GmbH; Dornier

Luftfahrt GmbH) Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0912) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5432. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc (RR) RB211-535 Series Turbofan Engine'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2009–0994)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5433. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Lycoming Engines Reciprocating Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0691)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5434. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Thielert Aircraft Engines GmbH Reciprocating Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0956)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5435. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Superior Air Parts, Lycoming Engines (Formerly Textron Lycoming), and Continental Motors, Inc., Fuel-Injected Reciprocating Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0547)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5436. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2010–0068)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5437. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Honeywell International Inc. TPE331–10 and TPE331–11 Series Turboprop Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0789)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5438. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2012–0037)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5439. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; CFM International, S.A. Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0946)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5440. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2012–0004)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. COONS):

S. 2215. A bill to create jobs in the United States by increasing United States exports to Africa by at least 200 percent in real dollar value within 10 years, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. LUGAR):

S. 2216. A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to make loans to certain entities that will use the funds to make loans to consumers to implement cost-effective energy efficiency measures to promote energy cost savings and rural development; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. ENZI, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, and Mr. HARKIN):

S. 2217. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to restore integrity to and strengthen payment limitation rules for commodity payments and benefits; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts):

S. 2218. A bill to reauthorize the United States Fire Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BEGICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. REED, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. COONS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. WEBB, Mr. CONRAD, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 2219. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to provide for additional disclosure requirements for corporations, labor organizations, Super PACs and other entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. LEVIN:

S. 2220. A bill for the relief of Momo Krcic; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. PAUL, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. WICKER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. LEE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BURR, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COATS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. COBURN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNS, Mr. HATCH, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KYL, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 2221. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Labor from finalizing a proposed rule under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 relating to child labor; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2222. A bill to require the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to take certain actions to reduce excessive speculation in energy markets; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BURR, and Mr. SHELBY):

S.J. Res. 38. A joint resolution disapproving a rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to the certification of nonimmigrant workers in temporary or seasonal nonagricultural employment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. KERRY):

S. Res. 401. A resolution expressing appreciation for Foreign Service and Civil Service professionals who represent the United States around the globe; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. HATCH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. AKAKA, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. TESTER, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. REED, Mr. MORAN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BEGICH, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. COATS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. Res. 402. A resolution condemning Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army for committing crimes against humanity and mass atrocities, and supporting ongoing efforts by the United States Government and governments in central Africa to remove Joseph Kony and Lord's Resistance Army commanders from the battlefield; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 403. A resolution to authorize testimony, document production, and legal representation in United States v. Richard F. ''Dickie'' Scruggs; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 102

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr.

RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 102, a bill to provide an optional fast-track procedure the President may use when submitting rescission requests, and for other purposes.

S. 418

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 418, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Civil Air Patrol.

S. 1039

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1039, a bill to impose sanctions on persons responsible for the detention, abuse, or death of Sergei Magnitsky, for the conspiracy to defraud the Russian Federation of taxes on corporate profits through fraudulent transactions and lawsuits against Hermitage, and for other gross violations of human rights in the Russian Federation, and for other purposes.

S. 1086

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize the Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act of 2004, to provide assistance to Best Buddies to support the expansion and development of mentoring programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1129

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1129, a bill to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to improve the management of grazing leases and permits, and for other purposes.

S. 1366

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1366, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to broaden the special rules for certain governmental plans under section 105(j) to include plans established by political subdivisions.

S. 2090

At the request of Mr. AKAKA, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2090, a bill to amend the Indian Law Enforcement Reform Act to extend the period of time provided to the Indian Law and Order Commission to produce a required report, and for other purposes.

S. 2122

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2122, a bill to clarify the definition of navigable waters, and for other purposes.

S. 2165

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2165, a bill to enhance strategic cooperation between the United States and Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2201

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2201, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the renewable energy credit.

S. 2204

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2204, a bill to eliminate unnecessary tax subsidies and promote renewable energy and energy conservation.

S. 2213

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, his name was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 2213, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2213, supra.

S. RES. 356

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 356, a resolution expressing support for the people of Tibet.

S. RES. 397

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 397, a resolution promoting peace and stability in Sudan, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. COONS):

S. 2215. A bill to create jobs in the United States by increasing United States exports to Africa by at least 200 percent in real dollar value within 10 years, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2215

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Increasing American Jobs Through Greater Exports to Africa Act of 2012''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Export growth helps United States business grow and create American jobs. In 2010, 60 percent of American exports came from small- and medium-sized businesses.

(2) On January 31, 2011, the President mandated an executive review across agencies to determine where the United States Government could become more competitive and helpful to business, including help with promoting exports.

(3) Several United States Government agencies are involved in export promotion. Coordination of the efforts of these agencies through the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee lacks sufficient strategic implementation and accountability.

(4) Many other countries have trade promotion programs that aggressively compete against United States exports in Africa and around the world. For example, in 2010, medium- and long-term official export credit general volumes from the Group of 7 countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States) totaled $65,400,000,000. Germany provided the largest level of support at $22,500,000,000, followed by France at $17,400,000,000 and the United States at $13,000,000,000. Official export credit support by emerging market economies such as Brazil, China, and India are significant as well.

(5) Between 2008 and 2010, China alone provided more than $110,000,000,000 in loans to the developing world, and, in 2009, China surpassed the United States as the leading trade partner of African countries. The Export-Import Bank of the United States substantially increased lending to United States businesses focused on Africa from $400,000,000 in 2009 to an anticipated $1,000,000,000 in 2011, but the Export-Import Bank of China dwarfed this effort with an estimated $12,000,000,000 worth of financing.

(6) Other countries such as India, Turkey, Russia, and Brazil are also aggressively seeking markets in Africa using their national export banks to provide concessional assistance.

(7) The Chinese practice of concessional financing runs contrary to the principles of the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development related to open market rates, undermines naturally competitive rates, and can allow governments in Africa to overlook the troubling record on labor practices, human rights, and environmental impact.

(8) The African continent is undergoing a period of rapid growth and middle class development, as seen from major indicators such as Internet use and clean water access. In 2000, only 6.7 percent of the population of Africa had access to the Internet. In 2009, 27.1 percent of the population had Internet access. Seventy-eight percent of Africa's rural population now has access to clean water.

(9) Economists have designated Africa as the ''next frontier market'', with profitability and growth rates among many African firms exceeding global averages in recent years. Countries in Africa have a collective spending power of almost $9,000,000,000 and a gross domestic product of $1,600,000,000,000, which are projected to double in the next 10 years.

(10) Sub-Saharan Africa is projected to have the fastest growing economies in the world over the next 5 years, with 7 of the 10 fastest growing economies located in sub-Saharan Africa.

(11) When countries such as China assist with large-scale government projects, they

also gain an upper hand in relations with African leaders and access to valuable commodities such as oil and copper, typically without regard to environmental, human rights, labor, or governance standards.

(12) Unless the United States can offer competitive financing for its firms in Africa, it will be deprived of opportunities to participate in African efforts to close the continent's significant infrastructure gap that amounts to an estimated $100,000,000,000.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to create jobs in the United States by expanding programs that will result in increasing United States exports to Africa by 200 percent in real dollar value within 10 years.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) AFRICA.—The term ''Africa'' refers to the entire continent of Africa and its 54 countries, including the Republic of South Sudan.

(2) AFRICAN DIASPORA.—The term ''African diaspora'' means the people of African origin living in the United States, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality, who are willing to contribute to the development of Africa.

(3) AGOA.—The term ''AGOA'' means the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.).

(4) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

(5) DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES.—The term ''development agencies'' includes the Department of State, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), and the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA).

(6) TRADE POLICY STAFF COMMITTEE.—The term ''Trade Policy Staff Committee'' means the Trade Policy Staff Committee established pursuant to section 2002.2 of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations, and is composed of representatives of Federal agencies in charge of developing and coordinating United States positions on international trade and trade-related investment issues.

(7) MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS.—The term ''multilateral development banks'' has the meaning given that term in section 1701(c)(4) of the International Financial Institutions Act (22 U.S.C. 262r(c)(4)) and includes the African Development Foundation.

(8) SUB-SAHARAN REGION.—The term ''sub-Saharan region'' refers to the 49 countries listed in section 107 of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3706) and includes the Republic of South Sudan.

(9) TRADE PROMOTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE.—The term ''Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee'' means the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee established by Executive Order 12870 (58 Fed. Reg. 51753).

(10) UNITED STATES AND FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SERVICE.—The term ''United States and Foreign Commercial Service'' means the United States and Foreign Commercial Service established by section 2301 of the Export Enhancement Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 4721).

SEC. 4. STRATEGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall establish a comprehensive United States strategy for public and private investment, trade, and development in Africa.

(b) FOCUS OF STRATEGY.—The strategy required by subsection (a) shall focus on—

(1) increasing exports of United States goods and services to Africa by 200 percent in real dollar value within 10 years from the date of the enactment of this Act;

(2) coordinating United States commercial interests with development priorities in Africa;

(3) developing relationships between the governments of countries in Africa and United States businesses that have an expertise in such issues as infrastructure development, technology, telecommunications, energy, and agriculture;

(4) improving the competitiveness of United States businesses in Africa, including the role the African diaspora can play in enhancing such competitiveness;

(5) exploring ways that African diaspora remittances can help governments in Africa tackle economic, development, and infrastructure financing needs;

(6) promoting economic integration in Africa through working with the subregional economic communities, supporting efforts for deeper integration through the development of customs unions within western and central Africa and within eastern and southern Africa, eliminating time-consuming border formalities into and within these areas, and supporting regionally based infrastructure projects;

(7) encouraging a greater understanding among United States business and financial communities of the opportunities Africa holds for United States exports; and

(8) monitoring—

(A) market loan rates and the availability of capital for United States business investment in Africa;

(B) loan rates offered by the governments of other countries for investment in Africa; and

(C) the policies of other countries with respect to export financing for investment in Africa that are predatory or distort markets.

(c) CONSULTATIONS.—In developing the strategy required by subsection (a), the President shall consult with—

(1) Congress;

(2) each agency that is a member of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee;

(3) the multilateral development banks;

(4) each agency that participates in the Trade Policy Staff Committee;

(5) the President's National Export Council;

(6) each of the development agencies;

(7) any other Federal agencies with responsibility for export promotion or financing and development; and

(8) the private sector, including businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and African diaspora groups.

(d) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—

(1) STRATEGY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to Congress the strategy required by subsection (a).

(2) PROGRESS REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of the strategy required by subsection (a).

(3) CONTENT OF REPORT.—The report required by paragraph (2) shall include an assessment of the extent to which the strategy required by subsection (a)—

(A) has been successful in developing critical analyses of policies to increase exports to Africa;

(B) has been successful in increasing the competitiveness of United States businesses in Africa;

(C) has been successful in creating jobs in the United States, including the nature and sustainability of such jobs;

(D) has provided sufficient United States Government support to meet third country competition in the region;

(E) has been successful in helping the African diaspora in the United States participate in economic growth in Africa;

(F) has been successful in promoting economic integration in Africa; and

(G) has made a meaningful contribution to the transformation of Africa and its full integration into the twenty-first century world economy, not only as a supplier of primary products but also as full participant in international supply and distribution chains.

SEC. 5. SPECIAL AFRICA STRATEGY COORDINATOR.

The President shall designate an individual to serve as Special Africa Export Strategy Coordinator—

(1) to oversee the development and implementation of the strategy required by section 4; and

(2) to coordinate with the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, (the interagency AGOA committees), and development agencies with respect to developing and implementing the strategy.

SEC. 6. TRADE MISSION TO AFRICA.

It is the sense of Congress that, not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce and other high-level officials of the United States Government with responsibility for export promotion, financing, and development should conduct a joint trade mission to Africa.

SEC. 7. PERSONNEL.

(a) UNITED STATES AND FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SERVICE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce shall ensure that not less than 14 total United States and Foreign Commercial Service officers are assigned to Africa.

(2) ASSIGNMENT.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee and the Special Africa Export Strategy Coordinator, assign the United States and Foreign Commercial Service officers described in paragraph (1) to United States embassies in Africa.

(3) MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce shall assign not less than 1 full-time United States and Foreign Commercial Service officer to the office of the United States Executive Director at each multilateral development bank.

(B) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Each United States and Foreign Commercial Service officer assigned under subparagraph (A) shall be responsible for—

(i) increasing the access of United States businesses to procurement contracts with the multilateral development bank to which the officer is assigned; and

(ii) facilitating the access of United States businesses to risk insurance, equity investments, consulting services, and lending provided by that bank.

(b) EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF THE UNITED STATES.—Of the amounts collected by the Export-Import Bank that remain after paying the expenses the Bank is authorized to pay from such amounts for administrative expenses, the Bank shall use sufficient funds to do the following:

(1) Assign, in consultation with the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee and the

Special Africa Export Strategy Coordinator, not less than 3 full-time employees of the Bank to geographically appropriate field offices in Africa.

(2) Increase the number of employees of the Bank assigned to United States field offices of the Bank to not less than 30, to be distributed as geographically appropriate through the United States. Such offices shall coordinate with the related export efforts undertaken by the Small Business Administration regional field offices.

(3) Upgrade the Bank's equipment and software to more expeditiously, effectively, and efficiently process and track applications for financing received by the Bank.

(c) OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION.—

(1) STAFFING.—Of the net offsetting collections collected by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation used for administrative expenses, the Corporation shall use sufficient funds to increase by not more than 5 the staff needed to promote stable and sustainable economic growth and development in Africa, to strengthen and expand the private sector in Africa, and to facilitate the general economic development of Africa, with a particular focus on helping United States businesses expand into African markets.

(2) REPORT.—The Corporation shall report to the appropriate congressional committees on whether recent technology upgrades have resulted in more effective and efficient processing and tracking of applications for financing received by the Corporation.

SEC. 8. TRAINING.

The President shall develop a plan—

(1) to standardize the training received by United States and Foreign Commercial Service officers, economic officers of the Department of State, and economic officers of the United States Agency for International Development with respect to the programs and procedures of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Small Business Administration, and the United States Trade and Development Agency; and

(2) to ensure that, not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act—

(A) all United States and Foreign Commercial Service officers that are stationed overseas receive the training described in paragraph (1); and

(B) in the case of a country to which no United States and Foreign Commercial Service officer is assigned, any economic officer of the Department of State stationed in that country shall receive that training.

SEC. 9. EXPORT-IMPORT BANK CAPITALIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6(a)(2) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635e(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''and'';

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''2011,'' and inserting ''2011, $95,000,000,000;''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) during fiscal year 2012 and each fiscal year thereafter through fiscal year 2016, $150,000,000,000; and

''(G) subject to paragraph (4), during fiscal year 2017 and each fiscal year thereafter, $175,000,000,000.''.

(b) SPECIAL RULE FOR INCREASE IN APPLICABLE AMOUNT.—Section 6(a) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635e(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) SPECIAL RULE FOR INCREASE IN APPLICABLE AMOUNT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning in fiscal year 2017, and each fiscal year thereafter, the applicable amount under paragraph (1) shall be $175,000,000,000, if the Comptroller General of the United States determines pursuant to subparagraph (B) that the increase in the applicable amount under paragraph (1)(F) has been effective in increasing viable loans to further United States exports, including to Africa.

''(B) REPORT BY GAO.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the operations of the Bank and the effectiveness of increasing the applicable amount under this subsection. Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit a report to Congress regarding the Comptroller General's determination on the effective use by the Bank of the increase in the applicable amount under this subsection.''.

(c) PERCENT TO BE USED FOR PROJECTS IN AFRICA.—Section 6(a) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635e(a)), as amended by subsection (b), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) PERCENT OF INCREASE TO BE USED FOR PROJECTS IN AFRICA.—Not less than 25 percent of the amount by which the applicable amount under paragraph (1) is increased under paragraph (2) (F) or (G) over the applicable amount for fiscal year 2011 shall be used for loans, guarantees, and insurance for projects in Africa.''.

(d) AVAILABILITY OF PORTION OF CAPITALIZATION TO COMPETE AGAINST FOREIGN CONCESSIONAL LOANS.—Not less than $250,000,000 of the total bank capitalization of the Export-Import Bank shall be available annually for loans that counter below-market rate, preferential, tied aid, or other related non-market loans offered by other nations for which United States companies are also competing or interested in competing.

SEC. 10. TIED AID CREDIT FUND.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Export-Import Bank should use its Tied Aid Credit Fund to aggressively help United States companies compete for projects in which a foreign government is using any type of below market, preferential, or tied aid loan. The Bank shall make use of any loan products available, including pursuant to section 9(d), to counter these foreign offerings.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Export-Import Bank shall report to the appropriate congressional committees if the Bank has not used at least $220,000,000 in tied aid credit during the preceding fiscal year. The report shall include—

(1) a description of all requests for grants from the Tied-Aid Credit Fund or other similar funds (established under section 10 of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635i–3)) received by the Bank during that fiscal year;

(2) a description of similar concessional (below market rate) loans made by other countries during that fiscal year; and

(3) a description of any such grant requests that were denied and the reason for such denial.

SEC. 11. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.

Section 22(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 649(b)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting ''the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee,'' after ''Director of the United States Trade and Development Agency,''; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by inserting ''regional offices of the Export-Import Bank,'' after ''Retired Executives,''.

SEC. 12. BILATERAL, SUBREGIONAL AND REGIONAL, AND MULTILATERAL AGREEMENTS.

Where applicable, the United States Trade Representative and officials of the Export-Import Bank shall explore opportunities to negotiate bilateral, subregional, and regional agreements that encourage trade and eliminate nontariff barriers to trade between countries, such as negotiating investor friendly double-taxation treaties and investment promotion agreements. United States negotiators in multilateral forum should take into account the objectives of this Act. To the extent any such agreements exist between the United States and an African country, the Trade Representative shall ensure that the agreement is being implemented in a manner that maximizes the positive effects for United States trade, export, and labor interests as well as the economic development of the countries in Africa.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. ENZI, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, and Mr. HARKIN):

S. 2217. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to restore integrity to and strengthen payment limitation rules for commodity payments and benefits; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Rural America Preservation Act of 2012. I appreciate Senators JOHNSON of South Dakota, ENZI, BROWN of Ohio, GILLIBRAND, HARKIN, and NELSON of Nebraska for joining on this bill, and in this effort.

As the Senate Agriculture Committee continues working on the next Farm Bill, one thing seems to be clear. The title one safety-net is going to look quite different than current programs. It appears the direct payment program may be done away with entirely. Some of my colleagues and agriculture groups have proposed a variety of new ideas as possible replacements to the current commodity title.

No matter what commodity program we create, my bill sets the marker on payment limitations. I introduced a similar payment limits bill last year, but this bill should better address whatever type of safety-net program we adopt going forward. The premise remains the same. We need firm payment limit. We need to close loopholes.

I support having a safety-net for farmers. This nation enjoys a safe and abundant food supply. Certainly a lot of that can be attributed to the ingenuity and hard work of the American farmer. But the farm safety-net helps small and medium-size farmers get through tough times that are out of their control.

We need an effective safety-net to assist farmers. But equally important is for Congress to develop a defensible safety-net. I will continue to work with my Agriculture committee colleagues to figure out what type of program will be most effective.

But we already know the steps that need to be taken to make it more defensible. Defensible means setting firm caps on the farm payments any one farmer can receive. The current approach does not have any overall cap. There is nothing wrong with farmers growing their operations. But big farmers shouldn't be using taxpayer dollars

to get even bigger. When the largest 10 percent of farmers receive 70 percent of farm payments, something is wrong. There comes a point where some farms reach levels that allow them to weather the tough financial times on their own. Smaller farms do not have the same luxury, but they play a pivotal role in producing this nation's food.

If you want to witness how farm payments to big farmers creates a barrier for small and beginning farmers, look at land prices. The current system puts upward pressure on land prices making it more difficult for small and beginning farmers to buy ground. This is not unique to Iowa. This upward pressure on land prices is occurring in many other states.

This bill proposes an overall cap of $250,000 for a married couple. In my State, many people would say this is still too high. But I recognize that agriculture can look different around the country, and so this is a compromise. Strong payment limits will ensure farm payments are helping those who payments were originally created for, the small and medium-size farmers.

Having an overall cap is more defensible from a Federal budget standpoint as well. This Nation needs to make tough decisions regarding all government programs. We need to find savings across the board. Setting strict caps on all commodity programs should be a no-brainer as we look to find savings and increase accountability in farm programs. Having a defensible safety-net also means closing loopholes in the current law.

For all the rhetoric that comes out of Washington, D.C. about eliminating fraud, waste, and abuse, making sure non-farmers don't game the system is a common sense step to take. It's simple, if you are not a farmer, you shouldn't get a farm payment. The bill I introduced last year, and this bill, has language that closes the loopholes.

After I introduced the bill last year, we received some questions regarding the language from two camps of people. The first camp of people I would say were critical because they don't want the loopholes closed. They would have us turn a blind eye to the fact people game the system. They would have us turn a blind eye to the fact we have nonfarmers who claim to help ''manage'' the farm by participating in one or two conference calls a year. To those people, I cannot satisfy your concerns. I will not turn a blind eye to abuses. These are loopholes that need to be closed.

To the other camp of people, who have provided constructive feedback, I would say, we have listened. The revisions we made addressed the issues raised. We have improved the language closing the loopholes. This bill provides a tangible, workable, and fair approach. Closing these loopholes is the right thing to do for the American taxpayer. It is the right thing to do for the American farmer.

Hard caps on farm payments and closing loopholes should be supported by anyone who wants an effective and defensible farm safety-net. As the Senate Agriculture Committee heads toward a mark-up of the Farm Bill, I invite my Senate colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2217

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Rural America Preservation Act of 2012''.

SEC. 2. PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.

Section 1001 of the Food Security of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) LEGAL ENTITY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'legal entity' means—

''(i) an organization that (subject to the requirements of this section and section 1001A) is eligible to receive a payment under a provision of law referred to in subsection (b), (c), or (d);

''(ii) a corporation, joint stock company, association, limited partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, charitable organization, estate, irrevocable trust, grantor of a revocable trust, or other similar entity (as determined by the Secretary); and

''(iii) an organization that is participating in a farming operation as a partner in a general partnership or as a participant in a joint venture.

''(B) EXCLUSION.—The term 'legal entity' does not include a general partnership or joint venture.'';

(2) by striking subsections (b) through (d) and inserting the following:

''(b) LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS FOR COVERED COMMODITIES.—The total amount of payments received, directly or indirectly, by a person or legal entity for any crop year for 1 or more covered commodities (except for peanuts) under title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8701 et seq.) (or a successor provision) may not exceed $125,000, of which—

''(1) not more than $75,000 may consist of marketing loan gains and loan deficiency payments under subtitle B or C of title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8731 et seq.) (or a successor provision); and

''(2) not more than $50,000 may consist of any other payments made for covered commodities under title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702 et seq.) (or a successor provision).

''(c) LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS FOR PEANUTS.—The total amount of payments received, directly or indirectly, by a person or legal entity for any crop year for peanuts under title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8701 et seq.) (or a successor provision) may not exceed $125,000, of which—

''(1) not more than $75,000 may consist of marketing loan gains and loan deficiency payments under subtitle B or C of title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8731 et seq.) (or a successor provision); and

''(2) not more than $50,000 may consist of any other payments made for peanuts under title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702 et seq.) (or a successor provision).

''(d) SPOUSAL EQUITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsections (b) and (c), except as provided in paragraph (2), if a person and the spouse of the person are covered by paragraph (2) and receive, directly or indirectly, any payment or gain covered by this section, the total amount of payments or gains (as applicable) covered by this section that the person and spouse may jointly receive during any crop year may not exceed an amount equal to twice the applicable dollar amounts specified in subsections (b) and (c).

''(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

''(A) SEPARATE FARMING OPERATIONS.—In the case of a married couple in which each spouse, before the marriage, was separately engaged in an unrelated farming operation, each spouse shall be treated as a separate person with respect to a farming operation brought into the marriage by a spouse, subject to the condition that the farming operation shall remain a separate farming operation, as determined by the Secretary.

''(B) ELECTION TO RECEIVE SEPARATE PAYMENTS.—A married couple may elect to receive payments separately in the name of each spouse if the total amount of payments and benefits described in subsections (b) and (c) that the married couple receives, directly or indirectly, does not exceed an amount equal to twice the applicable dollar amounts specified in those subsections.'';

(3) in paragraph (3)(B) of subsection (f), by adding at the end the following:

''(iii) IRREVOCABLE TRUSTS.—In promulgating regulations to define the term 'legal entity' as the term applies to irrevocable trusts, the Secretary shall ensure that irrevocable trusts are legitimate entities that have not been created for the purpose of avoiding a payment limitation.''; and

(4) in subsection (h), in the second sentence, by striking ''or other entity'' and inserting ''or legal entity''.

SEC. 3. SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE; PAYMENTS LIMITED TO ACTIVE FARMERS.

The Food Security Act of 1985 is amended by striking section 1001A (7 U.S.C. 1308–1) and inserting the following:

''SEC. 1001A. SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE; PAYMENTS LIMITED TO ACTIVE FARMERS.

''(a) SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of the application of limitations under this section, the Secretary shall not approve any change in a farming operation that otherwise would increase the number of persons or legal entities to which the limitations under this section apply, unless the Secretary determines that the change is bona fide and substantive.

''(2) SEPARATE EQUIPMENT AND LABOR.—For the purpose of paragraph (1), any division of a farming operation into 2 or more units under which the equipment and labor are not substantially separate shall not be considered bona fide and substantive.

''(3) FAMILY MEMBERS.—For the purpose of paragraph (1), the addition of a family member to a farming operation under the criteria established under subsection (b)(3)(B) shall be considered to be a bona fide and substantive change in the farming operation.

''(4) PRIMARY CONTROL.—To prevent a farming operation from reorganizing in a manner that is inconsistent with the purposes of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate such regulations as the Secretary determines to be necessary to simultaneously attribute payments for a farming operation to more than 1 person or legal entity, including the person or legal entity that exercises primary control over the farming operation, including to respond to—

''(A)(i) any instance in which ownership of a farming operation is transferred to a person or legal entity under an arrangement that provides for the sale or exchange of any asset or ownership interest in 1 or more legal entities at less than fair market value; and

''(ii) the transferor is provided preferential rights to repurchase the asset or interest at less than fair market value; or

''(B) a sale or exchange of any asset or ownership interest in 1 or more legal entities under an arrangement under which rights to exercise control over the asset or interest are retained, directly or indirectly, by the transferor.

''(b) PAYMENTS LIMITED TO ACTIVE FARMERS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive, directly or indirectly, payments or benefits described as being subject to limitation in subsection (b) or (c) of section 1001 with respect to a particular farming operation, a person or legal entity shall be actively engaged in farming with respect to the farming operation, in accordance with paragraphs (2), (3), and (4).

''(2) GENERAL CLASSES ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN FARMING.—

''(A) DEFINITION OF ACTIVE PERSONAL MANAGEMENT.—In this paragraph, the term 'active personal management' means, with respect to a person, management duties carried out by the person for a farming operation that are personally provided by the person on a regular, continuous, and substantial basis, including the supervision and direction of—

''(i) activities and labor involved in the farming operation; and

''(ii) onsite services directly related and necessary to the farming operation.

''(B) ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), for purposes of paragraph (1), the following shall apply:

''(i) A person shall be considered to be actively engaged in farming with respect to a farming operation if—

''(I) the person makes a significant contribution, as determined under subparagraph (E) (based on the total value of the farming operation), to the farming operation of—

''(aa) capital, equipment, or land; and

''(bb) personal labor or active personal management;

''(II) the share of the profits or losses of the person from the farming operation is commensurate with the contributions of the person to the operation; and

''(III) a contribution of the person is at risk.

''(ii) A legal entity shall be considered to be actively engaged in farming with respect to a farming operation if—

''(I) the legal entity makes a significant contribution, as determined under subparagraph (E) (based on the total value of the farming operation), to the farming operation of capital, equipment, or land;

''(II)(aa) the stockholders or members that collectively own at least 51 percent of the combined beneficial interest in the legal entity each make a significant contribution of personal labor or active personal management to the operation; or

''(bb) in the case of a legal entity in which all of the beneficial interests are held by family members, any stockholder or member (or household comprised of a stockholder or member and the spouse of the stockholder or member) who owns at least 10 percent of the beneficial interest in the legal entity makes a significant contribution of personal labor or active personal management; and

''(III) the legal entity meets the requirements of subclauses (II) and (III) of clause (i).

''(C) CERTAIN ENTITIES MAKING SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS.—If a general partnership, joint venture, or similar entity (as determined by the Secretary) separately makes a significant contribution (based on the total value of the farming operation involved) of capital, equipment, or land, the partners or members making a significant contribution of personal labor or active personal management and meeting the standards provided in subclauses (II) and (III) of subparagraph (B)(i) shall be considered to be actively engaged in farming with respect to the farming operation involved.

''(D) EQUIPMENT AND PERSONAL LABOR.—In making determinations under this subsection regarding equipment and personal labor, the Secretary shall take into consideration the equipment and personal labor normally and customarily provided by farm operators in the area involved to produce program crops.

''(E) SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION OF PERSONAL LABOR OR ACTIVE PERSONAL MANAGEMENT.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), for purposes of subparagraph (B), a person shall be considered to be providing, on behalf of the person or a legal entity, a significant contribution of personal labor or active personal management, if the total contribution of personal labor and active personal management is at least equal to the lesser of—

''(I) 1,000 hours; or

''(II) a period of time equal to—

''(aa) 50 percent of the commensurate share of the total number of hours of personal labor or active personal management required to conduct the farming operation; or

''(bb) in the case of a stockholder or member (or household comprised of a stockholder or member and the spouse of the stockholder or member) that owns at least 10 percent of the beneficial interest in a legal entity in which all of the beneficial interests are held by family members who do not collectively receive payments directly or indirectly, including payments received by spouses, of more than twice the applicable limit, 50 percent of the commensurate share of hours of the personal labor or active personal management of all family members required to conduct the farming operation.

''(ii) MINIMUM LABOR HOURS.—For the purpose of clause (i), the minimum number of labor hours required to produce a commodity shall be equal to the number of hours that would be necessary to conduct a farming operation for the production of each commodity that is comparable in size to the commensurate share of a person or legal entity in the farming operation for the production of the commodity, based on the minimum number of hours per acre required to produce the commodity in the State in which the farming operation is located, as determined by the Secretary.

''(3) SPECIAL CLASSES ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN FARMING.—Notwithstanding paragraph (2), the following persons shall be considered to be actively engaged in farming with respect to a farm operation:

''(A) LANDOWNERS.—A person or legal entity that is a landowner contributing owned land, and that meets the requirements of subclauses (II) and (III) of paragraph (2)(B)(i), if, as determined by the Secretary—

''(i) the landowner share-rents the land at a rate that is usual and customary; and

''(ii) the share received by the landowner is commensurate with the share of the crop or income received as rent.

''(B) FAMILY MEMBERS.—With respect to a farming operation conducted by persons who are family members, or a legal entity the majority of the stockholders or members of which are family members, an adult family member who makes a significant contribution (based on the total value of the farming operation) of active personal management or personal labor and, with respect to such contribution, who meets the requirements of subclauses (II) and (III) of paragraph (2)(B)(i).

''(C) SHARECROPPERS.—A sharecropper who makes a significant contribution of personal labor to the farming operation and, with respect to such contribution, who meets the requirements of subclauses (II) and (III) of paragraph (2)(B)(i), and who was receiving payments from the landowner as a sharecropper prior to the effective date of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246; 122 Stat. 1651).

''(D) FARM MANAGERS.—A person who otherwise meets the requirements of this subsection other than paragraph (2)(E) if—

''(i) the individual—

''(I)(aa) provides more than 50 percent of the commensurate share of the total number of hours of active personal management required to conduct the farming operation; and

''(bb) is, with respect to the commensurate share of the individual, the only party who is providing active personal management and who is at risk, other than a landlord, if any, described in subparagraph (A); or

''(II)(aa) is the only individual qualifying the farming operation (including a sole proprietorship, legal entity, general partnership, or joint venture) as actively engaged in farming; and

''(bb) qualifies only a single sole proprietorship, legal entity, general partnership, or joint venture as actively engaged in farming;

''(ii) the individual does not provide active personal management to meet the requirements of this subsection for persons or legal entities that collectively receive, directly or indirectly, an amount equal to more than the applicable limits under subsections (b), (c), and (d) of section 1001; and

''(iii) the individual manages a farm operation that is not jointly managed with persons or legal entities that collectively receive, directly or indirectly, an amount equal to more than the applicable limits under subsections (b), (c), and (d) of section 1001.

''(4) PERSONS AND LEGAL ENTITIES NOT ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN FARMING.—For the purposes of paragraph (1), except as provided in paragraph (3), the following persons and legal entities shall not be considered to be actively engaged in farming with respect to a farm operation:

''(A) LANDLORDS.—A landlord contributing land to the farming operation if the landlord receives cash rent, or a crop share guaranteed as to the amount of the commodity to be paid in rent, for such use of the land.

''(B) OTHER PERSONS AND LEGAL ENTITIES.—Any other person or legal entity, or class of persons or legal entities, that fails to meet the requirements of paragraphs (2) and (3), as determined by the Secretary.

''(5) PERSONAL LABOR OR ACTIVE PERSONAL MANAGEMENT.—No stockholder or other member of a legal entity or person may provide personal labor or active personal management to meet the requirements of this subsection for persons or legal entities that collectively receive, directly or indirectly, an amount equal to—

''(A) more than the applicable limits under subsections (b) and (c) of section 1001; or

''(B) in the case of a stockholder or member in conjunction with the spouse of the stockholder or member, more than the applicable limits described in subparagraph (A).

''(6) CUSTOM FARMING SERVICES.—A person or legal entity receiving custom farming services will be considered separately eligible for payment limitation purposes if the person or legal entity is actively engaged in farming based on paragraphs (1) through (3).

''(7) GROWERS OF HYBRID SEED.—To determine whether a person or legal entity growing hybrid seed under contract shall be considered to be actively engaged in farming, the Secretary shall not take into consideration the existence of a hybrid seed contract.

''(c) NOTIFICATION BY LEGAL ENTITIES.—To facilitate the administration of this section, each legal entity that receives payments or benefits described as being subject to limitation in subsection (b) or (c) of section 1001 with respect to a particular farming operation shall—

''(1) notify each person or other legal entity that acquires or holds a beneficial interest in the farming operation of the requirements and limitations under this section; and

''(2) provide to the Secretary, at such times and in such manner as the Secretary may require, the name and social security number of each person, or the name and taxpayer identification number of each legal entity, that holds or acquires such a beneficial interest.''.

SEC. 4. FOREIGN PERSONS AND LEGAL ENTITIES MADE INELIGIBLE FOR PROGRAM BENEFITS.

Section 1001C of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308–3) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking ''**PERSONS**'' and inserting ''**PERSONS AND LEGAL ENTITIES**'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking ''CORPORATION OR OTHER'' and inserting ''LEGAL'';

(B) in the first sentence, by striking ''a corporation or other entity shall be considered a person that'' and inserting ''a legal entity''; and

(C) in the second sentence, by striking ''an entity'' and inserting ''a legal entity''; and

(3) in subsection (c), by striking ''person'' and inserting ''legal entity or person''.

SEC. 5. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go-Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled ''Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation'' for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts):

S. 2218. A bill to reauthorize the United States Fire Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, as a cochair of the Congressional Fire Caucus, I am pleased to join Senator Lieberman in introducing legislation to reauthorize the U.S. Fire Administration. We appreciate Senators MCCAIN, CARPER and SCOTT BROWN becoming cosponsors of this bill. The Congressional Fire Services Institute, the International Association of Fire Fighters, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the National Volunteer Fire Council back this measure. I am proud to have their support.

Reauthorization of the U.S. Fire Administration means that first responders around the country will get the essential training, education, and research they need to help prevent fire-related deaths and protect their communities from disasters of all kinds—man-made and natural.

Since its creation in 1974, the Fire Administration and its Fire Academy have helped prevent fires, protect property, and save lives among firefighters and the public. Today, the Fire Administration is also integrated into our national, all-hazards preparations against natural disasters and terrorist attacks.

America's firefighters play a vital role in the security of our nation and it is important that, as a nation and a Congress, we support them. We can do so by reauthorizing the United States Fire Administration. Whether it is in response to a terrorist attack, a wildland fire, or a house fire the community, America has come to rely on firefighters. America's firefighters—whether career or volunteer—always answer the call.

In a report released in September, the United States Fire Administration found that, over the past 10 years, the overall number of fires reported in the United States has declined by 18 percent. During this same time period, there was also a 20 percent decline in civilian deaths and a 22 percent drop in civilian injuries. We can be proud of this progress.

According to the report, however, ''although America's fire death rate is improving, it continues to be higher than more than half of the industrialized countries of the world.'' Sadly, during this same time period, there has been an average of 3,570 deaths and nearly 18,300 injuries per year. The Fire Administration must work tirelessly to improve these statistics, which represent loss and pain to American families.

We must also continue to educate and train current and future generations of firefighters. The USFA plays an important role in the professional development of fire services personnel through the National Fire Academy, by providing courses in Fire Prevention Management, Hazardous Materials, Incident Management, and Arson, as well as many other critical courses.

My home State of Maine is keenly aware of the dangers of fire and the importance of effective fire services. According to the Maine Department of Public Safety, nearly 50 Mainers died in fires every year through the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. The average for the past decade is 17 per year, and 2011 sadly produced 23 fire-related deaths, up from only nine in 2010—both are too many.

With the continued work of the U.S. Fire Administration and the valiant efforts of our brave fire services personnel, I believe we can make further progress in lowering the number of fire related deaths in our nation.

I ask that my colleagues support this legislation.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BEGICH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. REED, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. COONS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. WEBB, Mr. CONRAD, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 2219. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to provide for additional disclosure requirements for corporations, labor organizations, Super PACs and other entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here today to introduce the DISCLOSE Act of 2012, and we are informally closing DISCLOSE 2.0 in recognition of the original bill that Senator SCHUMER worked so hard to get passed a few years ago.

The Supreme Court's 2010 decision in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission opened the floodgates to unlimited corporate and special interest money in elections, bringing about an era where corporations and other wealthy interests can drown out the voices of voters in our political system.

Worse still, much of this spending is anonymous so the public does not even know who is spending millions to influence our elections. Here is how my home State newspaper, the Providence Journal, explained the Citizens United decision:

> The ruling will mean that, more than ever, big-spending economic interests will determine who gets elected. More money will especially pour into relentless attack campaigns. Free speech for most individuals will suffer because their voices will count for even less than they do now. They will simply be drowned out by the big money.

I think events have proven the Providence Journal correct. Senator JOHN MCCAIN recently described these events. He said:

> I predicted when the United States Supreme Court, with their absolute ignorance of what happens in politics, struck down [the McCain-Feingold campaign finance law], that there would be a flood of money into campaigns, not transparency, unaccounted for, and this is exactly what is happening.

If we look at the 2006 and 2010 congressional elections where there was not a Presidential race going on after Citizens United in 2010, there was a fourfold increase in expenditures from super PACs and other outside groups compared to what occurred in 2006, with nearly three-quarters of that political advertising coming from sources that were prohibited from spending money in 2006—three-quarters of it.

Also, in 2010, those 501(c)(4) and (c)(6) organizations spent more than $135 million in unlimited and secret contributions. Anonymous spending rose

from 1 percent of outside spending in 2006 to 47 percent of outside spending in 2010. Nearly half of the money spent through these outside organizations is anonymous and secret.

If we look at the 2012 race that we are in right now, a Presidential race, and compare it to the last Presidential race, we are already seeing similar ominous signs about the influence of money. The Federal Election Commission predicts that over $11 billion will be spent on the 2012 elections, about double what was spent in 2008.

Super PACs, mostly linked to individual candidates, spent about $100 million through the Super Tuesday contest in the Republican Presidential primary, again, about twice what was spent over the same period in 2008. In the two weeks leading up to Super Tuesday, outside PACs that supported the Republican Presidential candidates spent three times as much as the candidates themselves.

Our campaign finance system is broken. Immediate action is required to fix it. Americans of all political stripes, whatever their persuasion, are disgusted by the influence of unlimited anonymous corporate cash in our elections and by campaigns that succeed or fail depending on how many billionaires the candidates have in their pockets.

Editorial boards across the country decry this new pollution of our politics. Republicans, such as former Governors Mike Huckabee and Tom Ridge, have concluded that super PACs are, in Mr. Huckabee's words, ''one of the worst things that ever happened in American politics.''

Seven in ten Americans, including a majority of both Republicans and Democrats, believe super PACS should be illegal. Countless Rhode Islanders are fed up with the influence of corporate money in elections. I hear them at my community dinners; I read their mail. Charles in Little Compton wrote to me,

> [I]t is wrong that someone who shouts louder or further, in this instance solely because they have more money, should drown out another person . . . [C]orporations have no problem getting their views aired.

Hope-Whitney in Bristol wrote,

> [J]ust the idea that a corporation is considered an individual in regards to politics goes against everything American to me. . . . [T]hey have become the Emperors as they have the financial ability to be heard everywhere. . . . I'd be willing to bet that a majority of their own employees do not agree with their political representation.

Elizabeth in Wakefield wrote:

> Big business should not control our elections. It is bad enough that they deeply influence our politicians through lobbyists.

But because of a 5-to-4 decision by the conservative Justices in Citizens United, Congress cannot prohibit super PACs from drowning out the voices of ordinary Americans in our elections. That leaves us with one weapon left in the fight against the overwhelming tidal wave of money from special interests. That weapon is disclosure, daylight, information.

Today, along with 34 other Senators, I am introducing legislation that will shine a bright light on these powerful shadowy interests. With this legislation, every citizen will know who is spending these great sums of money to get their candidate elected. I am delivering this speech at a time that Senator BENNET, the distinguished junior Senator from Colorado is presiding. I am very conscious and aware as I deliver it of the immense amount of work that he has put in in the process of preparing this legislation, working on a strategy for going forward, working with our leadership to commence that strategy.

I am grateful to him and the other Senators I will mention later. For now I will give the Presiding Officer the lead. In 2010, under Senator SCHUMER's leadership and guidance, we came within one vote of passing his original DISCLOSE Act. Since then, the problem of anonymous and unaccountable corporate money has become dramatically worse, and Americans are losing faith in our political system as a result.

More and more people believe their government responds only to wealthy and powerful corporate interests. As they see their jobs disappear and their wages stagnate, and bailouts and special deals for the big guys, they lose faith that their elected officials are listening to them. For our democracy to remain strong, this trend cannot continue. We must redouble our efforts and pass the DISCLOSE Act of 2012.

The bill we are introducing today has been trimmed down so it just does two simple things: One, if you are an organization such as a corporation, a super PAC or a 401(c)(4) group spending money in an election campaign in support of or in opposition to a candidate, you have to tell the public where that money came from and what you are spending it on in a timely manner. That should not be a controversial idea to anyone, at least to anyone who is not seeking special influence.

If you are a top executive or a major donor of an organization spending millions of dollars on campaign ads, you have to take responsibility for those ads by having your name on the ad, and in the case of an executive appearing in the ad yourself. That is it. Two simple provisions. Disclosure and a disclaimer. These are reasonable provisions that should have wide support from Democrats and Republicans alike.

The DISCLOSE Act of 2012, the DISCLOSE 2.0 Act, trims down the original DISCLOSE Act in another way. We have raised the threshold for donations that require disclosure from $600 to $10,000. It may sound as though $10,000 is a ridiculously high threshold, as though that is an awful lot of money, but when we look at what is happening in these super PACs, $10,000 in this particular world is no big deal.

Ninety-three percent of money raised by super PACs in 2010 and 2011 that can be traced to specific donors came in contributions of $10,000 or more. So we will catch probably 93 percent of the money in this reporting provision, while leaving smaller donations and dues payments to membership organizations private.

The act also does not require the disclosure of nonpolitical donations, affiliate transfers, business investments, and other transfers of money that have nothing to do with electioneering.

At the same time, however, the bill also contains strong provisions to prevent the use of dummy organizations or shell corporations to hide their donations from public view. The way this bill is drafted, if somebody sets up a phony organization to take a contribution and, in turn, make that contribution to another phony organization and, in turn, make that contribution to another phony organization, before it finally lands in a super PAC that is benefiting a candidate, we will be able to trace that series of transactions.

So it is a good law, a simpler law, an effective law. It only goes after high-dollar givers. Passing it would prove to the American people that Congress is committed to fairness, that we are committed to equality, and that we are committed to the fundamental principle of a government ''of the people, by the people, and for the people.''

In closing, I thank Senator SCHUMER for his exemplary leadership and determination on this vitally important issue, as well as Senators MICHAEL BENNET, AL FRANKEN, JEFF MERKLEY, JEANNE SHAHEEN, and TOM UDALL, all of whom have worked very closely on this legislation. I also thank the act's other cosponsors—all 35—who, similar to myself, understand that the legitimacy of our democratic process and the integrity of our democratic elections are at stake.

I look forward to working with any of my colleagues in the Senate who believe the voices of American citizens should be defended, and I hope all will join me in supporting this critical piece of legislation to restore integrity to our elections.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, I join with Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator SCHUMER and many other Senate Democrats as we renew our efforts to curtail some of the worst abuses now allowed because of the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United. The Democracy Is Strengthened by Casting Light On Spending in Elections, DISCLOSE, Act of 2012 will help to restore transparency in the campaign finance laws gutted by the narrow, conservative, activist majority of the Supreme Court in Citizens United.

Two years ago, with the stroke of a pen, five Supreme Court justices overturned a century of law designed to protect our elections from corporate spending. They ran roughshod over longstanding precedent to strike down key provisions of our bipartisan campaign finance laws, and ruled that corporations are no longer prohibited from

direct spending in political campaigns. I was troubled at the time and remain troubled today that in that case, the Supreme Court extended to corporations the same First Amendment rights in the political process that are guaranteed by the Constitution to individual Americans.

Corporations are not the same as individual Americans. Corporations do not have the same rights, the same morals or the same interests. Corporations cannot vote in our democracy. They are artificial legal constructs meant to facilitate business. The Founders understood this. Americans across the country have long understood this. A narrow majority on the Supreme Court apparently did not.

When I cosponsored the first DISCLOSE Act after the Supreme Court's decision in 2010, I hoped Republicans would join with Democrats to mitigate the impact of the Citizens United decision. I hoped that Senate Republicans who had once championed the bipartisan McCain-Feingold campaign finance law would work with us to help ensure that corporations could not abuse their newfound constitutional rights.

Regrettably, Senate Republicans filibustered that DISCLOSE Act, preventing the Senate from even debating the measure, let alone having an up-or-down vote in the Senate. By preventing even debate on the DISCLOSE Act, Senate Republicans ensured the ability of wealthy corporations to dominate all mediums of advertising and to drown out the voices of individuals, as we have seen and will continue to see in our elections.

By blocking the DISCLOSE Act, Senate Republicans ensured that the flood of corporate money flowing into campaigns from undisclosed and unaccountable sources since the Citizens United decision would continue. The risks we feared at the time of the decision, the risks that drove Congress to pass bipartisan laws based on longstanding precedent, have been apparent in the elections since. The American people have seen the sudden and dramatic effects in the Republican primary elections this year and in the 2010 mid-term elections. Instead of hearing the voices of voters, we see a barrage of negative advertisements from so-called Super PAC's. This comes as no surprise to the many of us in Congress and around the country who worried at the time of the Citizens United decision that it turns the idea of government of, by and for the people on its head. We worried that the decision created new rights for Wall Street at the expense of the people on Main Street. We worried that powerful corporate megaphones would drown out the voices and interests of individual Americans. It is clear those concerns were justified.

By reintroducing the DISCLOSE Act, we continue to try to fight the effects of corporate influence unleashed by Citizens United. The DISCLOSE Act of 2012 is focused on restoring transparency and accountability to campaign finance laws by ensuring that all Americans know who is paying for campaign ads. This is a critical step toward restoring the ability of American voters to be able to speak, be heard and to hear competing voices, and not be overwhelmed by corporate influence and driven out of the governing process. I hope that Republicans who have seen the impact of waves of unaccountable corporate campaign spending will not renew their obstruction of this important legislation. Even Senator MCCAIN, a lead co-author of the McCain-Feingold Act, has conceded that Super PAC's are ''disgraceful.''

Vermont is a small state. It is easy to imagine the wave of corporate money that has been spent on elections around the country lead to corporate interests flooding the airwaves with election ads, and transforming even local elections there or in other small States. It would not take more than a tiny fraction of corporate money to outspend all of our local candidates combined. If a local city council or zoning board is considering an issue of corporate interest, why would those corporate interests not try to drown out the views of Vermont's hard-working citizens? I know that the people of Vermont, like all Americans, take seriously their civic duty to choose wisely on Election Day. Like all Vermonters, I cherish the voters' role in the democratic process and am a staunch believer in the First Amendment. Vermont refused to ratify the Constitution until the adoption of the Bill of Rights in 1791. The rights of Vermonters and all Americans to speak to each other and to be heard should not be undercut by corporate spending. I hope all Senators, Republican or Democratic, will support the DISCLOSE Act of 2012 and help us take an important step to ensure the ability of every American to be heard and participate in free and fair elections.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 401—EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR FOREIGN SERVICE AND CIVIL SERVICE PROFESSIONALS WHO REPRESENT THE UNITED STATES AROUND THE GLOBE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. KERRY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 401

Whereas the United States Foreign Service was established by Congress in 1924 to professionalize the country's diplomatic and consular services and advance freedom, democracy, and security for the benefit of the people of the United States and the international community;

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development was established in 1961 to support the foreign policy goals of the United States through economic, development, and humanitarian assistance;

Whereas the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development together employ more than 27,000 United States nationals in the Foreign Service and Civil Service dedicated to promoting United States interests around the world;

Whereas Foreign Service personnel deploy to Asia, Africa, the Americas, Australia, Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia on a permanent, rotating basis to defend and promote United States priorities abroad;

Whereas many Foreign Service employees spend months or years away from families and loved ones on assignment to dangerous or inhospitable posts where family members are not permitted;

Whereas numerous Department of State and United States Agency for International Development employees have lost their lives while serving abroad;

Whereas strong and purposeful United States diplomacy and development, carried out by a diverse, professionally educated, and well-trained force of Foreign Service and Civil Service professionals, are the most cost-effective means to protect and advance United States interests abroad;

Whereas the promotion of commercial engagement by United States businesses in foreign markets and targeted international development projects support economic prosperity, job creation, and opportunities for United States business and industry;

Whereas United States diplomats are often the first line of defense against international conflict and transnational security threats;

Whereas Foreign Service and Civil Service professionals have worked to support the members of the United States Armed Forces involved in critical national security missions and military engagements in dangerous and unstable regions;

Whereas Foreign Service and Civil Service professionals administer emergency assistance in crisis situations; and

Whereas the contributions of Foreign Service and Civil Service professionals to the global advancement of international understanding, American ideals, and the promotion of freedom and democracy around the world should be commended: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and gives special appreciation to the Foreign Service and Civil Service personnel of the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, and other United States Government agencies that promote and protect United State priorities abroad; and

(2) owes a debt of gratitude to these individuals, and their families, who put public service and pride in their country ahead of comfort, convenience, and even safety in service to the United States and the global community.

SENATE RESOLUTION 402—CONDEMNING JOSEPH KONY AND THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY FOR COMMITTING CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND MASS ATROCITIES, AND SUPPORTING ONGOING EFFORTS BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENTS IN CENTRAL AFRICA TO REMOVE JOSEPH KONY AND LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY COMMANDERS FROM THE BATTLEFIELD

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. HATCH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. AKAKA, Mrs. MURRAY,

Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. TESTER, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. REED of Rhode Island, Mr. MORAN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BEGICH, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. COATS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. BLUNT) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 402

Whereas the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) wreaked havoc in northern Uganda for two decades, during which time the World Bank estimates that they abducted some 66,000 youth of all ages and sexes and forced them to serve as child soldiers and sex slaves and commit terrible acts;

Whereas, under increasing pressure, Joseph Kony ordered the Lord's Resistance Army in 2005 and 2006 to withdraw from Uganda and to move west into the border region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and what would become South Sudan;

Whereas, since September 2008, Joseph Kony has directed the Lord's Resistance Army to commit systematic, large-scale attacks against innocent civilians in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, and the Republic of South Sudan that have destabilized the region and resulted in the deliberate killing of at least 2,400 civilians from the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, and the Republic of South Sudan, many of whom were targeted in schools and churches; the rape and brutal mutilation of an unknown number of men, women, and children; the abduction of over 3,400 civilians, including at least 1,500 children, many of them forced to become child soldiers or sex slaves; and the displacement of more than 465,000 civilians from their homes, many of whom do not have access to essential humanitarian assistance;

Whereas insecurity caused by the Lord's Resistance Army has undermined efforts by the governments in the region, with the assistance of the United States and the international community, to consolidate peace and stability in each of the countries affected, particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of South Sudan;

Whereas, since December 2001, the Department of State has included the Lord's Resistance Army on its ''Terrorist Exclusion List'' and in August 2008, Lord's Resistance Army leader Joseph Kony was designated a ''Specially Designated Global Terrorist'' by President George W. Bush pursuant to Executive Order 13224;

Whereas, on October 6, 2005, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants against Joseph Kony and four of his top commanders for war crimes and crimes against humanity, yet they remain at large;

Whereas, in May 2010, Congress passed and President Barack Obama signed into law the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–172), which made it the policy of the United States to work with regional governments toward a comprehensive and lasting resolution to the conflict in northern Uganda and other affected areas by providing political, economic, military, and intelligence support for viable multilateral efforts to protect civilians from the Lord's Resistance Army, to apprehend or remove Joseph Kony and his top commanders from the battlefield, and to disarm and demobilize the remaining Lord's Resistance Army fighters;

Whereas, on November 24, 2010, as mandated by the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009, President Obama issued the Strategy to Support the Disarmament of the Lord's Resistance Army, which provides a comprehensive strategy for supporting regional efforts to mitigate and eliminate the threat to civilians and regional stability posed by the Lord's Resistance Army;

Whereas, on October 14, 2011, President Obama notified Congress that he had authorized approximately 100 combat-equipped members of the Armed Forces to deploy to central Africa to provide assistance to regional forces that are working toward the removal of Joseph Kony and senior leadership of the Lord's Resistance Army from the battlefield;

Whereas the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81) authorized the Secretary of Defense, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to provide logistic support, supplies, and services for foreign forces participating in operations to mitigate and eliminate the threat of the Lord's Resistance Army;

Whereas the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112–74) directed the President to support increased peace and security efforts in areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army, including programs to improve physical access, telecommunications infrastructure, and early-warning mechanisms and to support the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former Lord's Resistance Army combatants, especially child soldiers;

Whereas the United Nations and African Union, acting with encouragement and support from the United States Government, have renewed their efforts to help governments in the region address the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army, and on November 22, 2011, the African Union designated the Lord's Resistance Army as a terrorist group and authorized a new initiative to help strengthen the coordination among the affected governments in the fight against the Lord's Resistance Army; and

Whereas targeted United States assistance and leadership can help prevent further mass atrocities and curtail humanitarian suffering in central Africa: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army for committing crimes against humanity and mass atrocities, and supports ongoing efforts by the United States and countries in central Africa to remove Joseph Kony and Lord's Resistance Army commanders from the battlefield;

(2) commends continued efforts by the Governments of Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and other counties in the region, as well as the African Union and United Nations, to end the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army;

(3) welcomes the ongoing efforts of the United States Government to implement a comprehensive strategy to counter the Lord's Resistance Army, pursuant to the Lord's Resistence Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009, and to assist governments in the region to bring Joseph Kony to justice and end atrocities perpetuated by the Lord's Resistance Army;

(4) calls on the President to keep Congress fully informed of the efforts of the United States Government and to work closely with Congress to identify and address critical gaps and enhance United States support for the regional effort to counter the Lord's Resistance Army;

(5) commends the Department of Defense, United States Africa Command (U.S. AFRICOM), and members of the United States Armed Forces currently deployed to serve as advisors to the national militaries in the region seeking to protect local communities and pursuing Joseph Kony and top Lord's Resistance Army commanders;

(6) supports continued efforts by the Secretary of State and representatives of the United States to work with partner nations and the international community—

(A) to strengthen the capabilities of regional military forces deployed to protect civilians and pursue commanders of the Lord's Resistance Army;

(B) to enhance cooperation and cross-border coordination among regional governments;

(C) to promote increased contributions from donor nations for regional security and civilian efforts to address the Lord's Resistance Army; and

(D) to enhance overall efforts to increase civilian protection and provide assistance to populations affected by the Lord's Resistance Army;

(7) calls on the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and the heads of other government agencies to utilize existing funds for ongoing programs—

(A) to enhance mobility, intelligence, and logistical capabilities for partner forces engaged in efforts to protect civilians and apprehend or remove Joseph Kony and his top commanders from the battlefield;

(B) to expand physical access and telecommunications infrastructure to facilitate the timely flow of information and access for humanitarian and protection actors;

(C) to support programs to encourage and help non-indicted Lord's Resistance Army commanders, fighters, abductees, and associated noncombatants to safely defect from the group, including through radio and community programs; and

(D) to rehabilitate children and youth affected by war, which are tailored to address the specific trauma and physical and mental abuse they may face as a result of indoctrination by the Lord's Resistance Army, and serve to reconnect these children and youth with their families and communities;

(8) calls for the President to place restrictions on any individuals or governments found to be providing training, supplies, financing, or support of any kind to Joseph Kony or the Lord's Resistance Army;

(9) urges that civilian protection continue to be prioritized in areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army and that steps be taken to inform potentially vulnerable communities about known Lord's Resistance Army movements and threats;

(10) welcomes the recent defections of men, women, and children from the ranks of the Lord's Resistance Army, and calls on governments in the region and the international community to continue to support safe return, demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration efforts; and

(11) urges the Governments of Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of South Sudan, the Republic of Sudan, and the Central African Republic to work together to address the ongoing threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army.

SENATE RESOLUTION 403—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY, DOCUMENT PRODUCTION, AND LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. RICHARD F. ''DICKIE'' SCRUGGS

Mr. REID of Nevada (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 403

Whereas, in the case of United States vs. Richard F. ''Dickie'' Scruggs, Case No. 3:09–CR–00002–GHD–SAA, pending in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi, the defense has served a subpoena for testimony on Hugh Gamble, a former employee of Senator Trent Lott, and a subpoena for testimony and document production on Brad Davis, an employee of Senator Thad Cochran;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§ 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for testimony relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate;

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Hugh Gamble, Brad Davis, and any other employee from whom testimony may be necessary are authorized to testify, and Brad Davis is authorized to produce documents, in the case of United States vs. Richard F. ''Dickie'' Scruggs, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Hugh Gamble, Brad Davis, and any other employee of the Senate from whom evidence may be sought, in connection with the testimony and document production authorized in section one of this resolution.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1945. Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2038, to prohibit Members of Congress and employees of Congress from using nonpublic information derived from their official positions for personal benefit, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1945. Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2038, to prohibit Members of Congress and employees of Congress from using nonpublic information derived from their official positions for personal benefit, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the House amendment, add the following:

TITLE II—PUBLIC CORRUPTION PROSECUTION IMPROVEMENTS

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Public Corruption Prosecution Improvements Act of 2012''.

SEC. 202. VENUE FOR FEDERAL OFFENSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The second undesignated paragraph of section 3237(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding before the period at the end the following: ''or in any district in which an act in furtherance of the offense is committed''.

(b) SECTION HEADING.—The heading for section 3237 of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 3237. OFFENSE TAKING PLACE IN MORE THAN ONE DISTRICT.''.

(c) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 211 of title 18, United States Code, is amended so that the item relating to section 3237 reads as follows:

''Sec. 3237. Offense taking place in more than one district.''.

SEC. 203. THEFT OR BRIBERY CONCERNING PROGRAMS RECEIVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 666(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''10 years'' and inserting ''20 years'';

(2) by striking ''$5,000'' the second place and the third place it appears and inserting ''$1,000'';

(3) by striking ''anything of value'' each place it appears and inserting ''any thing or things of value''; and

(4) in paragraph (1)(B), by inserting after ''anything'' the following: ''or things''.

SEC. 204. PENALTY FOR SECTION 641 VIOLATIONS.

Section 641 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''ten years'' and inserting ''15 years''.

SEC. 205. BRIBERY AND GRAFT; CLARIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF ''OFFICIAL ACT''; CLARIFICATION OF THE CRIME OF ILLEGAL GRATUITIES.

(a) DEFINITION.—Section 201(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) the term 'official act'—

''(A) means any act within the range of official duty, and any decision or action on any question, matter, cause, suit, proceeding, or controversy, which may at any time be pending, or which may by law be brought before any public official, in such public official's official capacity or in such official's place of trust or profit; and

''(B) may be a single act, more than one act, or a course of conduct; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) the term 'rule or regulation' means a Federal regulation or a rule of the House of Representatives or the Senate, including those rules and regulations governing the acceptance of gifts and campaign contributions.''.

(b) CLARIFICATION.—Section 201(c)(1) of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(1) otherwise than as provided by law for the proper discharge of official duty, or by rule or regulation—

''(A) directly or indirectly gives, offers, or promises any thing or things of value to any public official, former public official, or person selected to be a public official for or because of any official act performed or to be performed by such public official, former public official, or person selected to be a public official;

''(B) directly or indirectly, knowingly gives, offers, or promises any thing or things of value with an aggregate value of not less than $1000 to any public official, former public official, or person selected to be a public official for or because of the official's or person's official position;

''(C) being a public official, former public official, or person selected to be a public official, directly or indirectly, knowingly demands, seeks, receives, accepts, or agrees to receive or accept any thing or things of value with an aggregate value of not less than $1000 personally for or because of the official's or person's official position; or

''(D) being a public official, former public official, or person selected to be a public official, directly or indirectly demands, seeks, receives, accepts, or agrees to receive or accept any thing or things of value personally for or because of any official act performed or to be performed by such official or person;''.

SEC. 206. AMENDMENT OF THE SENTENCING GUIDELINES RELATING TO CERTAIN CRIMES.

(a) DIRECTIVE TO SENTENCING COMMISSION.—Pursuant to its authority under section 994(p) of title 28, United States Code, and in accordance with this section, the United States Sentencing Commission forthwith shall review and, if appropriate, amend its guidelines and its policy statements applicable to persons convicted of an offense under section 201, 641, 1346A, or 666 of title 18, United States Code, in order to reflect the intent of Congress that such penalties meet the requirements in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out this subsection, the Commission shall—

(1) ensure that the sentencing guidelines and policy statements reflect Congress's intent that the guidelines and policy statements reflect the serious nature of the offenses described in paragraph (1), the incidence of such offenses, and the need for an effective deterrent and appropriate punishment to prevent such offenses;

(2) consider the extent to which the guidelines may or may not appropriately account for—

(A) the potential and actual harm to the public and the amount of any loss resulting from the offense;

(B) the level of sophistication and planning involved in the offense;

(C) whether the offense was committed for purposes of commercial advantage or private financial benefit;

(D) whether the defendant acted with intent to cause either physical or property harm in committing the offense;

(E) the extent to which the offense represented an abuse of trust by the offender and was committed in a manner that undermined public confidence in the Federal, State, or local government; and

(F) whether the violation was intended to or had the effect of creating a threat to public health or safety, injury to any person or even death;

(3) assure reasonable consistency with other relevant directives and with other sentencing guidelines;

(4) account for any additional aggravating or mitigating circumstances that might justify exceptions to the generally applicable sentencing ranges;

(5) make any necessary conforming changes to the sentencing guidelines; and

(6) assure that the guidelines adequately meet the purposes of sentencing as set forth in section 3553(a)(2) of title 18, United States Code.

SEC. 207. EXTENSION OF STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR SERIOUS PUBLIC CORRUPTION OFFENSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 213 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§ 3302. Corruption offenses

''Unless an indictment is returned or the information is filed against a person within 6 years after the commission of the offense, a person may not be prosecuted, tried, or punished for a violation of, or a conspiracy or an attempt to violate the offense in—

''(1) section 201 or 666;

''(2) section 1341 or 1343, when charged in conjunction with section 1346 and where the offense involves a scheme or artifice to deprive another of the intangible right of honest services of a public official or when charged in connection with section 1346A;

''(3) section 1951, if the offense involves extortion under color of official right;

''(4) section 1952, to the extent that the unlawful activity involves bribery; or

''(5) section 1962, to the extent that the racketeering activity involves bribery chargeable under State law, involves a violation of section 201 or 666, section 1341 or 1343, when charged in conjunction with section 1346 and where the offense involves a scheme or artifice to deprive another of the intangible right of honest services of a public official, or section 1951, if the offense involves extortion under color of official right.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 213 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''3302. Corruption offenses.''.

(c) APPLICATION OF AMENDMENT.—The amendments made by this section shall not apply to any offense committed before the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 208. INCREASE OF MAXIMUM PENALTIES FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC CORRUPTION RELATED OFFENSES.

(a) SOLICITATION OF POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 602(a)(4) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''3 years'' and inserting ''5 years''.

(b) PROMISE OF EMPLOYMENT FOR POLITICAL ACTIVITY.—Section 600 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''one year'' and inserting ''3 years''.

(c) DEPRIVATION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR POLITICAL ACTIVITY.—Section 601(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''one year'' and inserting ''3 years''.

(d) INTIMIDATION TO SECURE POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 606 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''three years'' and inserting ''5 years''.

(e) SOLICITATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF CONTRIBUTIONS IN FEDERAL OFFICES.—Section 607(a)(2) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''3 years'' and inserting ''5 years''.

(f) COERCION OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—Section 610 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''three years'' and inserting ''5 years''.

SEC. 209. ADDITIONAL WIRETAP PREDICATES.

Section 2516(1)(c) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting ''section 641 (relating to embezzlement or theft of public money, property, or records), section 666 (relating to theft or bribery concerning programs receiving Federal funds),'' after ''section 224 (bribery in sporting contests),''; and

(2) by inserting ''section 1031 (relating to major fraud against the United States)'' after ''section 1014 (relating to loans and credit applications generally; renewals and discounts),''.

SEC. 210. EXPANDING VENUE FOR PERJURY AND OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE PROCEEDINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1512(i) of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(i) A prosecution under section 1503, 1504, 1505, 1508, 1509, 1510, or this section may be brought in the district in which the conduct constituting the alleged offense occurred or in which the official proceeding (whether or not pending or about to be instituted) was intended to be affected.''.

(b) PERJURY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 79 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§ 1624. Venue

''A prosecution under section 1621(1), 1622 (in regard to subornation of perjury under 1621(1)), or 1623 of this title may be brought in the district in which the oath, declaration, certificate, verification, or statement under penalty of perjury is made or in which a proceeding takes place in connection with the oath, declaration, certificate, verification, or statement.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 79 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''1624. Venue.''.

SEC. 211. PROHIBITION ON UNDISCLOSED SELF-DEALING BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1346 the following new section:

"§ 1346A. Undisclosed self-dealing by public officials

''(a) UNDISCLOSED SELF-DEALING BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS.—For purposes of this chapter, the term 'scheme or artifice to defraud' also includes a scheme or artifice by a public official to engage in undisclosed self-dealing.

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section:

''(1) OFFICIAL ACT.—The term official act—

''(A) means any act within the range of official duty, and any decision or action on any question, matter, cause, suit, proceeding, or controversy, which may at any time be pending, or which may by law be brought before any public official, in such public official's official capacity or in such official's place of trust or profit; and

''(B) may be a single act, more than one act, or a course of conduct.

''(2) PUBLIC OFFICIAL.—The term 'public official' means an officer, employee, or elected or appointed representative, or person acting for or on be half of the United States, a State, or a subdivision of a State, or any department, agency or branch of government thereof, in any official function, under or by authority of any such department, agency, or branch of government.

''(3) STATE.—The term 'State' includes a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, and any commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States.

''(4) UNDISCLOSED SELF-DEALING.—The term 'undisclosed self-dealing' means that—

''(A) a public official performs an official act for the purpose, in whole or in material part, of furthering or benefitting a financial interest, of which the public official has knowledge, of—

''(i) the public official;

''(ii) the spouse or minor child of the public official;

''(iii) a general business partner of the public official;

''(iv) a business or organization in which the public official is serving as an employee, officer, director, trustee, or general partner;

''(v) an individual, business, or organization with whom the public official is negotiating for, or has any arrangement concerning, prospective employment or financial compensation; or

''(vi) an individual, business, or organization from whom the public official has received any thing or things of value, otherwise than as provided by law for the proper discharge of official duty, or by rule or regulation; and

''(B) the public official knowingly falsifies, conceals, or covers up material information that is required to be disclosed by any Federal, State, or local statute, rule, regulation, or charter applicable to the public official, or knowingly fails to disclose material information in a manner that is required by any Federal, State, or local statute, rule, regulation, or charter applicable to the public official.

''(5) MATERIAL INFORMATION.—The term 'material information' means information—

''(A) regarding a financial interest of a person described in clauses (i) through (iv) paragraph (4)(A); and

''(B) regarding the association, connection, or dealings by a public official with an individual, business, or organization as described in clauses (iii) through (vi) of paragraph (4)(A).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 63 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1346 the following new item:

''1346A. Undisclosed self-dealing by public officials.''.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this section apply to acts engaged in on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 212. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION IN COMPLAINTS AGAINST JUDGES.

Section 360(a) of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2) by striking ''or'';

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end, and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

''(4) such disclosure of information regarding a potential criminal offense is made to the Attorney General, a Federal, State, or local grand jury, or a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency.''.

SEC. 213. CLARIFICATION OF EXEMPTION IN CERTAIN BRIBERY OFFENSES.

Section 666(c) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''This section does not apply to''; and

(2) by inserting ''The term 'any thing or things of value' that is corruptly solicited, demanded, accepted or agreed to be accepted in subsection (a)(1)(B) or corruptly given, offered, or agreed to be given in subsection (a)(2) shall not include,'' before ''bona fide salary''.

SEC. 214. CERTIFICATIONS REGARDING APPEALS BY UNITED STATES.

Section 3731 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after ''United States attorney'' the following: '', Deputy Attorney General, Assistant Attorney General, or the Attorney General''.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. AKAKA. I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Thursday, March 22, 2012, at 2:15 p.m. in Room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct legislative hearings on S. 1684, the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments

of 2011; S. 1898, A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain property from the United States to the Maniilaq Association located in Kotzebue, Alaska; and H.R. 1560, A bill to amend the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and Alabama and Coushatta Indian Tribes of Texas Restoration Act to allow the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo Tribe to determine blood quantum requirements for membership in that tribe.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224–2251.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet in open session on Thursday, March 29, 2012 at 10 a.m. in SD–430 Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''FDA User Fee Agreements: Strengthening FDA and the Medical Products Industry for the Benefit of Patients.''

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact the committee on (202) 224–7675.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 21, 2012, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 21, 2012, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Retooling Government for the 21st Century: The President's Reorganization Plan and Reducing Duplication.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 21, 2012, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Homeland Security Department's Budget Submission for Fiscal Year 2013.''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 21, 2012, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Justice for All: Convicting the Guilty and Exonerating the Innocent.''

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 21, 2012, in room G–50 of the Senate Dirksen Office Building, beginning at 10 a.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION POLICY, AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy, and Consumer Rights, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 21, 2012, at 2 p.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Verizon/Cable Deals: Harmless Collaboration or a Threat to Competition and Consumers?''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 21, 2012, at 10 a.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 21, 2012, at 2:30 p.m.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following disposition of the House message to accompany S. 2038, the STOCK Act, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 441, 462 and 463; that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on Calendar Nos. 441, 462, and 463, in that order; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

AUTHORIZING SENATE LEGAL REPRESENTATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to S. Res. 403, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 403) to authorize testimony, document production, and legal representation in United States v. Richard F. ''Dickie'' Scruggs.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this resolution concerns testimony, document production, and representation in a criminal matter pending in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi. In this postconviction proceeding, the defendant, Richard F. ''Dickie'' Scruggs, is seeking to have his honest-services fraud conviction vacated based on the Supreme Court's intervening decision in the case of United States v. Skilling.

The criminal conviction, which resulted from a guilty plea, involved the defendant's scheme to bribe a State judge by agreeing to ask Senator Lott to consider the State judge's application to fill a federal judicial vacancy. The defense is seeking testimony from a former staffer of Senator Lott about a brief phone conversation between the Senator and the State judge. Neither Senator Lott nor anyone on his staff was aware of the defendant's scheme.

The defense is also seeking testimony and document production from a staffer of Senator COCHRAN about contacts with Senator COCHRAN's office by or on behalf of the State judge in his efforts to obtain a federal judgeship.

Both Senators Lott and COCHRAN would like to assist by providing relevant evidence from their staff in this proceeding. This resolution would accordingly authorize Senator Lott's and COCHRAN's employees, and any other Senate employee from whom evidence may be necessary, to provide evidence in this action, with representation by the Senate Legal Counsel.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 403) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 403

Whereas, in the case of United States vs. Richard F. ''Dickie'' Scruggs, Case No. 3:09–CR–00002–GHD–SAA, pending in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi, the defense has served a subpoena for testimony on Hugh Gamble, a former employee of Senator Trent Lott, and

a subpoena for testimony and document production on Brad Davis, an employee of Senator Thad Cochran;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§ 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for testimony relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate;

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Hugh Gamble, Brad Davis, and any other employee from whom testimony may be necessary are authorized to testify, and Brad Davis is authorized to produce documents, in the case of United States vs. Richard F. ''Dickie'' Scruggs, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Hugh Gamble, Brad Davis, and any other employee of the Senate from whom evidence may be sought, in connection with the testimony and document production authorized in section one of this resolution.

DISCHARGE AND REFERRAL—H.R. 306

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that H.R. 306 be discharged from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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

ORDER FOR PRINTING OF TRIBUTES AND STATEMENTS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there be printed as a Senate document a compilation of materials from the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in tribute to Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, and that Members have until Thursday, March 29, to submit such tributes.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2012

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until Thursday, March 22, at 9:30 a.m.; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half; that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 3606, the IPO bill; further, that the filing deadline for second-degree amendments to the Reid motion to concur with respect to S. 2038, the STOCK Act, be 10:30 a.m. on Thursday.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there will be a series of up to seven rollcall votes tomorrow, beginning at 2:30 p.m., including completion of the IPO bill, the STOCK Act, and confirmation of three judicial nominations.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DURBIN. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent it adjourn under the previous order following the remarks of Senators WYDEN and LANDRIEU.

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

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

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

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I have been able to listen a bit to the wonderful tributes over the last few hours to Senator MIKULSKI. We all know of her wonderful service all these years, the record that is being shattered—a very special record.

As I listened to some of the comments, I was struck that tributes usually come in the Senate when one of our colleagues is leaving office or sometimes one of our colleagues passes away. And what I am struck by this afternoon is how glad I am and colleagues on both sides of the aisle are that Senator MIKULSKI is very much alive, and next week and next month and in the years ahead she is going to continue to bring this kind of wellspring of conscience and energy and passion and expertise to the Senate.

I am going to have more to say in terms of a lengthier speech, but she and I have had a special relationship for almost three decades. We served together in the other body on the Energy and Commerce Committee. We would often show up at meetings together, and this is still a tradition that continues now because we both have the honor of serving on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Senator MIKULSKI and I would walk in together, and she would smile and say: Now the long and short of it are arriving. And I guess that is true in a literal sense, but while Senator MIKULSKI may be modest in stature, she has one very large record on behalf of the public interest, and I am especially grateful for all she has done for people without power and people without clout.

When we think about what has so angered the American people—and I have heard the Senator from Colorado, the Presiding Officer, talk about this—it is that people feel so disconnected from government; that you can have a community meeting in Oregon or Colorado or Maryland or some other part of the country, and somehow there is this sense what goes on in Washington really has nothing to do with people in their home community.

Senator MIKULSKI doesn't practice public service that way. Senator MIKULSKI has always felt, since the days when she was a community organizer and they were dealing with those community problems and where are you going to locate a freeway or something of that nature, that public service and community service were always about being connected to people. She understood right away what people may say at a townhall meeting now in Colorado or Oregon about government being removed from their lives, and for decades she has practiced a very different kind of public service. She did it when she was a community organizer, she did it in the House of Representatives, and she continues to do it today.

Very often when we take the subway to a vote and I ask her what she has done over the weekend, she will talk about families. She knows I was codirector of the Gray Panthers for many years before I was elected to Congress, so we will talk about aging issues. And everybody knows what she has done in the aging field and her interest in fighting Alzheimer's. So it always comes back to people, and that connection she brings to public service that is so lacking from what Americans see is the big problem in government today, that much of what goes on here is simply disconnected from their lives.

What I see in BARBARA MIKULSKI is the real measure of what we want in a public servant. We want someone who is conscientious, we want someone who is smart, we want someone who has good values and someone who always tries to be a coalition builder.

I have watched Senator MIKULSKI in lots of instances. We had one just recently where Senator MIKULSKI was trying to find a balance on a difficult and contentious issue between industry and the environment, and I watched how she was trying to listen to both sides. Maryland has some communities where they have older plants, and if she can't take steps to protect those plants and have the workers keep their jobs, a lot of people are going to hurt, and Senator MIKULSKI always tries to keep that from happening. She has also said clean air and the environmental

laws are important. And that last quality of trying to bring people together, which I have heard the Senator from Colorado talk about, is what Senator MIKULSKI's public service career has been all about.

So tonight and through the day we have heard colleagues pay tribute. I made mention of the fact that so often I hear these tributes when a colleague is leaving the Senate. I would like to close these brief remarks by saying that I am especially grateful that the cause of good government is enhanced by the fact that Senator MIKULSKI is very much alive. This is not a tribute to someone who is leaving office, this is a tribute to someone who is going to be here next week, next month, and the years ahead, continuing to shatter those records as she advocates for people who don't have big lobbies, who don't have lots of political clout and can't go out and hire PR firms and well-paid and well-tailored advocates to walk the halls of the Senate. She is there for those people who don't have a voice. She has been there for those people ever since she was a community organizer in those early days in Baltimore.

When I think about trying to give public service a good name, I think about BARBARA MIKULSKI—our wonderful friend, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, the senior Senator from the State of Maryland. We thank her for giving public service a good name. We thank her for taking on the battles and the fights she has in the past. And we are all especially grateful that at the end of this tribute she will be back at her post a few seats from me, standing for those values and standing for those causes that are so important to the well-being of this country.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I may be the last speaker of the day, but I did not want to leave the Chamber or the building without taking a moment to come to the floor, as so many of our colleagues did today, to honor one of our own, one of our favorites. Not only is she a favorite to us but I am certain beyond the shadow of a doubt that she is one of the favorite Senators ever to represent the State of Maryland. She is respected, she is beloved, and she is admired by millions of her constituents from Maryland, but I can promise you that is true of constituents in Louisiana, potentially in your home State, Madam President, and throughout the world.

Last Saturday our friend and colleague Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI of Maryland became the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress. I can only say that we have come a long way since the first woman was appointed, as I recall back in the 1920s. She was only allowed to serve 1 day and was not going to be given a paycheck but insisted that she be paid for her service. I think she might have been paid $1 for her service.

Of course, the record of that 1 day on the floor speaks for itself. We have come a long way since that day. But BARBARA MIKULSKI was first elected to the House in 1976, and then to the Senate 10 years later. When she first entered this Chamber, there was only one other woman here, her friend and her good, strong, supportive colleague, Nancy Kassebaum, a Republican from Kansas. So a Democrat from Maryland and a Republican from Kansas, but the two of them were quite a team and BARBARA MIKULSKI speaks fondly of her days with Senator Nancy Kassebaum. Today there are 17 of us and proudly we continue that tradition of respect and bipartisanship set in large measure by two of the women we greatly admire.

The late Representative Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts, who served from 1925 to 1960, had previously held the record for the longest serving woman in Congress. Breaking this record is only one of the many milestones Senator MIKULSKI has accomplished during her tenure in the Senate. But, as she would so quickly say, it is not how long you serve but how well you serve. It is not the length of your service, as she said to us so many times, but the quality of your service. We could not have a better role model—in terms of effectiveness, strength, tenacity, courage, boldness—than in our own Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI.

She was the first female Democrat, the first in the history of our country, to serve in both Chambers of Congress, the first female Democrat to be elected to the Senate without succeeding a husband or a father, and the first female to chair an Appropriations Committee.

I serve on the Appropriations Committee. It is one of the most powerful committees in our Congress. When I think about the fact that it took over 225 years for a woman to get the gavel on just one of the 14 subcommittees—that number has changed over the decades—but if you think about it, from the beginning of our country's history, those early days through the expansion out West, through the Civil War, post-Civil War history, the early part of the 1900s, World War I, World War II—never did a woman hold a gavel to write one budget for one committee in the entire country, until BARBARA MIKULSKI received one of those gavels.

I can tell you from personal experience serving with her on that committee, our country is a better place—in health, in welfare, our space program, our science and technology programs—because BARBARA MIKULSKI has used that gavel not to promote herself but to promote the people she serves and the principles for which she fights.

She is well respected for her wisdom, for her tenacity and her strength. She is respected by female and male peers who serve with her. As most of my female colleagues in the Senate have also experienced, Senator MIKULSKI took me under her wing when I was first sworn in as a Senator. She extended her hand to help me in every way possible, to help me find my footing here as a Senator and to navigate through the intricacies of the Senate process. She was never too busy to hold out a helping hand or for a pat on the shoulder. She was always willing to give that extra advice and, I might say, was always willing to suggest that you might have made a mistake—try it a little different way the next time—not one to mince words, but as a good Big Sister would take us under her wing and help us out as any good Big Sister would do.

In addition to that wonderful, helpful, and thoughtful gesture that she shared with me and so many, she has been an inspiration to many women, particularly young women who have looked up to her, trying to follow in her footsteps.

I can only say that this Senate and this Congress—the people of Maryland, the people of our country and women throughout the world—have been blessed by her leadership.

What has touched me the most about watching her is the fearlessness in which she serves. She does not back down. She knows herself, she is comfortable in her own skin, and she doesn't try to be someone she is not. She is very proud of her Polish-American background, always proud to talk about the bakery her parents owned, her immigrant background, and always so willing to share from her heart as well as her mind some of what she believes.

She has been nothing but an inspiration to me and to many. I am so glad I could come to the floor today, I am so glad. I think almost every one of our colleagues has made it to the floor to honor her. When God made BARBARA MIKULSKI, he threw away the mold. I don't think there will ever be one like her. There most certainly isn't anyone in politics today who is like her. That is good, to be unique in that way. She will be long remembered. I hope she will serve here for many wonderful years to come.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:10 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 22, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

RAINEY RANSOM BRANDT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE JOAN Z. MCAVOY, RETIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

JOHN S. LEONARDO, OF ARIZONA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE DENNIS K. BURKE, RESIGNED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF AIR FORCE RESERVE, AND APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 8038

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JAMES F. JACKSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ANDREW E. BUSCH

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ROBERT B. BROWN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE AND APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 3038:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JEFFREY W. TALLEY

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. DOUGLAS G. MORTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. TERRY J. MOULTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. DAVID R. PIMPO
CAPT. DONALD L. SINGLETON

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JAMES M. VEAZEY, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR ARMY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S. C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be major

SHARI F. SHUGART

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

DANIEL A. GALVIN
SEAN V. KELLEHER
JOHN P. KUNSTBECK
THOMAS J. SEARS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

ANTHONY R. CAMACHO
CARLTON C. CLEVELAND II
KEVIN R. KICK
RICHARD J. SLOMA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

JAMES M. BLEDSOE
ALBERT A. CITRO III
CHRISTOPHER P. CMIEL
HARRISON B. GILLIAM
MANUEL R. MEDINA
MARK K. OHANLON
JOSEPH P. STEPHENS
DANIEL J. YOUNG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JOHN R. ABELLA
TIMOTHY M. ADAIR
ELIZABETH A. ADAMS
BRIAN J. ADKINS
RANDALL D. AGNEW
ROMAINE M. AGUON
BRIAN J. AHLERS
JACOB W. ALFORD
DESHAUNDA R. ALLEN
MICAH E. ALLEN
XAVIER C. ALLEN
MATTHEW L. ALVAREZ
BRAD D. ANDERSON
DESIREE L. ANDERSON
SEAN M. ANDERSON
REYNA J. ANDREL
JORGE A. APONTE
TOBIAS S. APTICAR
MIGUEL A. AQUINO
ADAM N. ARAUJO
JAIME L. ARIZMENDI-AROCHO
DARRELL R. ARNDT
NATHANIEL J. ARNOLD
SAUL A. ARROYO
MICHAEL E. ASHTON
STEVEN D. ATWOOD
CODY M. AUTREY
GEORGE M. AUTRY
JAHREN D. BAEZ
KYLE P. BAIR
CHRISTOPHER M. BALDWIN
TIMOTHY J. BALLAS
EMERSON F. BAMBA
SHEILA A. BANKS
STEPHEN F. BARKER
MICHAEL J. BARNETT
JONATHAN BARRETO
JOSE V. BARROS
MATHEW A. BAUMGARTEN
CHRISTOPHER S. BAY
AARON J. BECKER
JEFFREY M. BELCOURT
BRIDGETTE R. BELL
SEAN M. BELL
STACY L. BEQUER
NOEL P. BERGERON
DAVID H. BERGMANN
CHRISTOPHER L. BERRY
DALE E. BERRY
LILLIAN A. BERRY
DAVID S. BEST
TRAVIS W. BLASCHKE
WILLIAM D. BOISVERT
ANGELA C. BORDEN
EDWARD L. BOULDIN
JEREMY M. BOURQUE
ELLHUE S. BOWLES, JR.
BROOKS D. BOYD
DERWIN BRADLEY
TONEY M. BRANTLEY
GRANT J. BRAYLEY
LARRY D. BRINSON, JR.
WILLIAM O. BRITT III
CRAIG L. BROE
ARTHUR G. BRONG
AARON S. BROWN
CHRISTOPHER A. BROWN
JONATHAN L. BROWN
MICHAEL C. BROWN
MORRIS BROWN, JR.
TONI N. BROWN
LEE M. BRUNER III
MIA P. BRUNER
CHARLES V. BUIE
CORRIS L. BULLOCK
QUINTON B. BURGESS
MICHAEL A. BURGETT
JEFFREY L. BUTTARS
KEVIN D. CAESAR
JOE D. CALDWELL, JR.
STEVEN E. CAMACHO
NAYARI N. CAMERON
TAMIKO M. CAMPBELL
HILARY C. CAMPHOUSE
TIFFANY L. L. CARLISLE
ANDREW S. CARPENTER
ESTHER CASARI
ADAM R. CATES
LEANDER B. CATES
BRAD A. CATON
FRANK A. CENKNER
NATACHA CERISIER-WHETSTONE
BRANDON M. CHAPMAN
HELEN M. CHEARS
SEAN M. CHERMER
CARLSON D. CHOW
KENT L. CHRISTOPHER
DAVID M. CHUDY
DAVID S. CLARK
NICOLE L. CLARK
COURTNEY G. CLAYTON
ANTONIO C. COFFEY
JOSHUA D. COLLINS
PATRICK A. CONFER
TORRANCE L. CONNER
COREY A. COOPER
ERIK A. CORCORAN
TRAVIS E. COREY
AMY M. CORY
JASON L. COWAN
THERESA B. COX
REBECCA J. COZAD
MIRANDA R. CRAIG
JASON P. CRIST
JASON S. CRITZER
CASSANDRA S. CROSBY
MARK W. CROWDER
JOSE J. CRUZ
CHRISTEE S. CUTTINO
CASSANDRA E. DAILEY
REBECCA A. DANGELO
CLAUDIA I. DANIEL
GREGORY L. DARDEN
JUSTIN L. DARNELL
MOLLY C. DAVIDSON
BRIAN D. DAVIS
MARCUS D. DAVIS
OCTAVIA L. DAVIS
SCOTT M. DAVIS
THOMAS S. DAVIS
TY G. DAWSON
CARTER G. DEEKENS
JAMES W. DEER
JOHN D. DEGIULIO
ROSA V. DELAGARZA
DAVID W. DENNETT
JOSEPH F. DENNING, JR.
JERRY A. DEQUASIE
LATIKA S. DIXON
MICHAEL J. M. DIZON
MAX W. DONALDSON
CHARMAINE R. DOUCETTE
LONNY L. DOUTHIT
THADDEUS J. DOUTHITT
DAVID DUNCAN
JEREMY R. EBDRUP
EARL L. ELAM
GERVELINE ELIASSAINT
MARK A. ELLIS
BARRICK K. ELMORE
JONATHAN ENGROOS
LARRY L. EPPS, JR.
CHRISTY L. ERWIN
JOHN C. FAUST
GINA M. FERGUSON
VICTORIA L. FERREIRA
ANDRE R. FIELDS
GREGORY D. FINN
TAMMY D. FISHEL
DAVID P. FLEMING
JAMES E. FLOTT
KEITH L. FORD
BENVERREN H. FORTUNE
ANTHONY L. FREDA
JONATHAN T. FREDRITZ
MICHAEL H. FULLMER
BURTON FURLOW, JR.
MATTHEW F. FURTADO
CHARLES G. FYFFE
SHANE L. GAINAN
TARONE L. GALLOWAY
TIMOTHY L. GALLOWAY
DUSTIN D. GAMACHE
LYDIA C. GANDARA
EFRAIN A. GARCIA-COLON
BRENT D. GARGUS
PROSPERO J. GATUS
KENNETH J. GAUSE
WAYNE GENDRON
TAWOFIK M. GHAZAL
DUSTIN M. GILFOIL
JARROD D. GILLESPIE
ALPHONSO A. GILMORE
NAQUAVA E. GLENN
AMAURY A. GOMEZ
MICHAEL G. GOODKNIGHT
CHAON P. GORDON
CHRISTOPHER J. GORDON
GABRIEL GRANADOS
LESLIE A. GRAYHAM
JEDMUND W. GREENE
JACQUELINE M. GREGG
MARIA M. C. GREGORY
DOUGLAS GRIFFITH
WILLIAM F. GRIFFITHS
DANIEL W. HADDOX
NATHAN L. HADLOCK
KRIS B. HALEY
ANTHONY L. HALL
JEREON W. HALL
JEFFREY P. HALLADAY
MICHAEL A. HALLINAN
DENNIS L. HAN
KEVIN M. HARPER
NICOLE L. HARRELL
SHAUNAREY HARRIS
TONY L. HARRIS
W N. HARRIS
JOSHUA S. HARTWICK
JOSHUA L. HEADLEY
ROBERT A. HEDGE, JR.
KENNETH R. HEEBNER
BRIAN S. HEISE
CHAD M. HENDERSON
JEROME HENDERSON
LAWRENCE E. HENDERSON
ANTIWAN M. HENNING
EVERETT M. HENRY II
KENNETH E. HERNDON
CHRISTOPHER M. HILL
PAUL E. HOLT, JR.

JUSTIN T. HORSFALL
KATHRYN Z. HOSTETLER
ALEX J. HOUSTON III
GREGORY HOWARD, JR.
DANIEL L. HOWSER
ALLEN J. HUGHES
ALFRED E. HUNTE III
JANAY L. HURLEY
MATTHEW J. HURLEY
BRYAN C. HUTCHERSON
JESSE J. IGLESIAS
MARIO M. IGLESIAS
EDDIE L. IIAMS
EUGENE IRBY
CHRISTOPHER D. ISBELL
ALLAN S. JACKMAN
MATTHEW P. JACOBS
LATOYA M. JAMES
WILLIAM M. JAMIESON
HARLEY P. JENNINGS
NICOLE L. JEPSEN
RAPHAEL A. JIMENEZ-RAMIREZ II
ALFONSO T. JOHNSON
DEREK G. JOHNSON
EDWARD B. JOHNSON, JR.
JASON L. JOHNSON
MARTIN A. L. JOHNSON
MELISSA E. JOHNSON
NAOMI S. JOHNSON
TEZSLYN L. JOHNSON
RACHEL J. JOSHUA
FELICIA JOYNER
JOHNNY J. JUN
MATTHEW P. KENT
JOSHUA T. KERTON
STEPHEN J. KILDOW
SARA D. KIMSEY
ERIC K. KING
STACY L. KING
VALERIE KNIGHT
BRANDON M. KOAY
JOSEPH D. KOMANETZ
BONNIE S. KOVATCH
KELLI J. KULHANEK
AMANDA R. LAM
JOHN D. LAMKIN
DANIEL E. LANDRUM
MARIEJANE V. LARIMER
MELINDA LATTING
CLEOPATRA W. LAWSON
ALBERT J. LEE
MICHAEL J. LEE
KATHERINE A. LEIDENBERG
RONALD C. LENKER
WILLIAM A. LESLIE, JR.
DENNIS M. LEUNG
JASON M. LOGAN
HANS J. LOKODI
EDGAR A. LOPEZ
MIREYA K. LUMPKIN
JOSHUA H. LUNSFORD
JOEL M. MACHAK
CHARLIE MACK III
JAMAAL A. MACK
JASON S. MALONE
THOMAS J. MARBURY
MARGARET J. MARCELLO
CHRISTIAN C. MARKS
JOSEPH C. MARSHALL
WALTER L. MARSHALL
JEFFREY L. MARSTELLER
ROBERT P. MASSEY
CHRISTOPHER J. MASSON
IRMA M. MATOS
ERIK D. MATTES
ROBERT A. MATTHEWS
JOHN V. MAUNTEL
ERIC S. MCCALL
MICHAEL R. MCCARTY
MARY K. MCCRAY
AARON M. MCCULLOUGH
RONNIE D. MCCULLOUGH
RYAN P. MCDONALD
PAUL D. MEDLEY
GERARDO MENAL
JOAQUIN M. MENO
RENEE M. MICHEL
MICHAEL A. MIGNANO
KORY C. MILLER
MICHAEL R. MILLER
NICHOLAS J. MILLER
RENINA C. MILLER
JAE K. MIN
MATTHEW W. MISKOWSKI
JEANNETTE M. MOLINA
DONALD MOORE, JR.
DONWAYGO R. MOORE, SR.
JODIE M. MOORE
AYANNADJENABA A. MORALES
CARL M. MOSES
DAVID C. MOSES
KIRK E. MOSS
JAMES D. MULLIN
AVA W. MURPHY
PATRICIA C. MURPHY
SHANE L. MURPHY
LASHONDA C. NAIRN
JACOB T. NAYLOR
ANTHONY P. NEWMAN
CHRISTIAN S. NEWTON
TYLER D. OLSEN
HADIYA E. ONEAL
STEPHEN F. OSTRANDER
WILLIAM OWEN
MICHAEL O. OZOLS
TIMOTHY N. PAGE
MATTHEW P. PANEPINTO
NICHOLAS P. PANEPINTO
CATHERINE Z. PAPOULOGLOU
THOMAS A. PARKER
VANESSA M. PARKER
MICHELLE L. PARLETTE
ALICIA M. PARTIN
JEAN P. PAUL
JON J. PEARL
AARON D. PEARSALL
STEPHANIE M. PEGHER
ERIC C. PENA
YVONNE V. PERDOMO
RYAN D. PERUSICH
GEOFFREY A. PETERS
DWAYNE A. PETERSON
RICKY PHAN
ERIX S. PHILLIPS
JON T. PHILLIPS
JEFFREY A. PHILLIPY
LANELLE J. PICKETT
OBADIAH J. PILKINGTON
CRISTIAN A. PINZON
EDUARDO G. PLASCENCIA
ADRIAN L. PLATER
RICHARD R. PLESS
DEOSARAN POKHAI
DREW T. PONIVAS
LEVITICUS D. POPE
TIMOTHY J. POWLAS
MANUEL PRADO
KEITH N. PRATT
ROBERT T. PREMO
PATRICK B. PRESTON
KENNETH D. PRICE
ALIM A. QAASIM
JEFFREY J. QUAIL
NEROLIZA QUILES
ANGELA M. QUINN
AGUSTIN QUINONESVARGAS
ERIK QUIRALTE
EUPHEMIA S. RAMEY
SCOTT A. R. RAMIREZ
TINA L. RAMIREZ
RAMON G. RAMOS
PAUL H. RAMSEY
WILLIE R. RAMSEY
JIBRIL B. RASHAD
ADAM D. RAY
KALIN M. REARDON
PATRICK J. REARDON
MARK C. REED
ZAMBIA S. REMLEY
ARLENE C. RILEY
MATTHEW C. RIVERA
MELODY D. ROBINSON
NARVO N. ROBINSON
STEVEN C. ROBINSON
DANIEL RODRIGUEZ, JR.
JEREMY J. ROGERS
CHRISTOPHER J. RONALD
BENJAMIN ROSARIO-CAMACHO
WILFORD A. RUFFIN
EDWARD R. RUNYAN
AMY A. SAAL
JEFFREY L. SACKS
RODRICK C. SALTER
DAVID A. SANCHEZ
JAYSON A. SANCHEZ
ADIA H. SANDERS
GARY E. SANDERS II
JAMES C. SANDERS
KENNETH E. SCATTERGOOD
RALPH E. SCHNEIDER IV
SCOTT M. SCHOEN
JOHN B. SCHULKE, JR.
JONATHAN M. SEITER
PAUL D. SELL
ROBERT S. SHAW
ALAN W. SHOLES, JR.
JOHN D. SHORT
JAIME L. SIMMONS
BRADLEY C. SINES
MICHAEL S. SJOSTROM
DENNIS I. SLATTERY
ALLY M. SLEIMAN
CHER C. SMITH
CRYSTAL V. SMITH
EDWARD J. SMITH
GREGORY S. SMITH
JOEL D. SMITH
JOSHUA J. SMITH
KELLEY A. SMITH
OLIVER D. SMITH
SHANNON I. SMITH
STANTON W. SMITH
EUNICE H. SORRELL
JOSHUA D. SOUTHWORTH
TREVOR A. SPARKS
JAMIE M. STAHL
AMANDA K. STAMBACH
BRIAN S. STANLEY
NICOLE R. STARR
VICTORIA S. STAUFFER
JERRY STECHER
DAKOTA R. STEEDSMAN
MELISSA M. STEVENSON
MATTHEW A. SUHAR
MATTHEW B. SULLIVAN
VIRGINIA A. SUPANICK
ROBERT J. SUTTON
CAMILLA M. SWAIN
RYAN D. TACKETT
JUAN TALAMANTES, JR.
MARILYN TAMATAVE
VERNON D. TAYLOR
KEISHA A. TEIXEIRA
DWAYNE M. TERRY
MUHAREM TERZIC
GRANT T. THIMSEN
CHRISTOPHER D. THOMAS
DRENNA L. THOMPSON
JERMON D. TILLMAN
ROSLYN D. TILLMAN
TONY D. TINDERHOLT
DANIEL P. TONE
KEITH O. TONEY
ORLANDO L. TORRES
ROBERT J. TREMBLAY
WILLIAM N. TRENOR
DANIEL T. TROST
KENNETH M. TWITTY
VIC J. UNDERWOOD
CHRISTOPHER J. URYNOWICZ
KATIE M. UTLEY
MIKLOS S. VAJDA
PLOURDE VALLON
PATRICK S. VANKIRK
EDISON H. VARGAS
IAN J. VARGAS
MELODY L. VARNER
DOMINIC T. VAUGHAN
JUAN A. VEGA
SOL A. VELEZ
ERIC VERBURG
JUAN A. VILLATORO
THOMAS M. VIRNIG
JOHNNY H. VUONG
LINDA C. WADE
ROBERT L. WALLS
SHAREEFAH J. WATERS
ASHLEY L. WATSON
LATASHA WATSON
CAREY E. WAY
ANTHONY J. WEILBACHER
JOHN D. WEISSENBORN
BRIAN J. WELCH
ALLEN S. WELLMAN
BRANDY L. WEST
ROBERT J. WEST
BRETT C. WHEELER
ALEX B. WHITE
CHRISTOPHER M. WHITTEN
CORNELIUS D. WILBERT
BRANDON J. WILKINS
AGNITA M. WILLIAMS
ANDREA WILLIAMS
BRIAN M. WILLIAMS
DAVID C. WILLIAMS
JACQUELINE R. WILLIAMS
JAMES M. WILLIAMS
JAY A. WILLIAMS
KELSY R. WILLIAMS
NICHOLAS I. WILLIAMS
YOLANDA M. WILLIAMS
BENJAMIN E. WILSON
NICKOLA R. WILSON
RICHARD S. WILT, JR.
CHANCE L. WIREY
JEFFREY L. WITHERSPOON
DEWAYNE G. WOOD
EDWARD M. WOODALL
PHILLIP G. WOODEN
SHANON B. WOODS
JAMES E. WORD
LAURIJEAN C. WRIGHT
CHAD D. WRIGLESWORTH
DANIEL M. YABLONSKI
TRACY L. YATES
STANLEY M. YOUNG
WILLIAM Y. YUN
AMBER R. ZEIGLER
ALAN ZERO
ADAM C. ZIEGLER
JASON S. ZMIJSKI
D011081
D010584

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

DREW Q. ABELL
JOHN C. ACOSTA
BRADY C. ADAMS
MATTHEW J. ADAMS
BRADLEY K. ALLBRITTEN
ERNEST A. ALMAZAN
PETER P. ALMIREZ
IVAN M. ALVARADO
HUMBERTO A. ALVAREZ
DARIUS D. ANANIA
ANN S. ANDERSON
JUDITH ANTOINE
DANIEL B. ANTON
SIDDAHARTHA G. ARIAS
MATTHEW J. ARNOLD
DALLEN R. ARNY
TERRY L. ARVA
BRETT J. ASHWORTH
CHARLES T. AUSTIN
CARLO U. AVERGAS
GINA M. AVILES
CHARLES R. BAILEY
JONATHAN N. BAILEY
MARK J. BALBONI
MICHAEL J. BALLARD
CHRISTIE E. BANNER
LAWRENCE E. BARBER
MATTHEW S. BARGER
STEPHEN W. BATEMAN
AARON D. BEAM
JOSHUA P. BEARD
RICHARD D. I. BECKER

CHARLES J. BELL
NICOLE A. BELL
TRAVIS M. BELLER
BENJAMIN K. BENNETT
ARTHUR J. BENSON
DANNY L. BERNDT
WYMAN T. BEY
SPENCER BIAH
CHRISTOPHER S. BILLINGSLEY
MARTY W. BISHOP
COLLIN A. BISSELL
JUSTIN T. BLADES
MELISSA A. BLONDIN
SCOTT M. BOBIER
DAVID G. BOCK
CHRISTOPHER B. BOER
BEN M. BORJA
BLAKE C. BOTILL
ROBERT H. BOTSFORD
BENJAMIN S. BOWDEN
GREGORY J. BOWLES
SIMON A. BOYD
TRAVIS B. BRASHERS
MATTHEW J. BRENNAN
KENNETH N. BROCK
JAMES M. BROGAN
KENNETH B. BROOKS
THOMAS V. BROOKS
DAVID C. BROWN
SEAN C. BROWN
TEKEITHIA C. BROWN
MATTHEW O. BRUNDAGE
JOHN W. BRUSHABER
ALICIA E. BRYANT
STEPHANIE M. BUCK
JERRY D. BUCKLES
DANE W. BUCKLEY
WILLIAM N. BURGOS, JR.
DAVID W. BUTLER
JOHN A. BYRD
FELIX K. CANETE
ENRIQUE T. CANIZALES-PYLES
JEFFREY L. CANNING
KENNETH W. CAREL
JUAN F. CARLETON
CHAD E. CARR
DERRICK P. CARVER
MARY C. CASSIDY
ALBERTO CASTRO
ALLAN J. CATINDIG
STEVEN R. CAVIN
JESUS CEJA
MICHELLE F. CENDANA
ANTHONY E. CERULLO
ALEX B. CHANEY
KAREN CHARCHAN
BRIAN CHEN
BRUCE E. CHOJNACKI
ANDREW E. CHOVANCEK
NORMAN R. CHRISTIE
YOUNG H. CHUN
JONATHAN M. CINTRON
DOMINICK G. CLEMENTE, JR.
SHARMAN J. CLINCY
JASON C. COAD
TRAVIS L. COFFMAN
JAMES V. COLLADO
VICTOR COLLADO
ROBERT N. COLLIER
CHRISTOPHER A. COLLINS
CHRISTOPHER M. COLLINS
JUSTIN E. COLLINS
CHRISTOPHER U. COLUMBRES
DENNIS J. COMPTON
JOHN M. COMSTOCK
JOSHUA S. CONARY
WILLIAM J. CONSTANTINO
JEREMY A. COOPER
CASEY J. CORCORAN
ERIC B. CORDAS
STEPHEN P. CORPUS
LUCAS P. COTTRELL
JOHN M. CRAIGHEAD
MATTHEW S. CROSBY
WILLIAM R. CROSS
TIMOTHY P. CULLERS
JONATHAN P. CURTIS
GREGORY E. CZYZYK
CHARLES G. DAILEY
PAUL A. DALEN
DEREK A. DALY
DONALD J. DANGLER
CHAD S. DANIELS
BOBBY E. DAVIS, JR.
ELDONDA L. DAVIS
MARK A. DAVIS
MATTHEW B. DAVIS
STEVEN A. DAVIS
ROBERT A. DAY
AARON M. DEAN
DAVID E. DEHART
TRAVIS D. DELKER
LEONARD B. DELLA-MORETTA III
DAVID S. DIETZ
TIFFANY L. DILLS
HARRY L. DINGLE
CHRISTOPHER W. DISTIFENO
PAUL D. DOLEZAL
TIMOTHY M. DOLL
MICHAEL L. DONEGAN
ANDREW X. DOWNEY
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LEMAR A. FARHAD
CHRISTOPHER D. FELIX
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NATHAN K. FINNEY
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ANTHONY D. FISIC
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JANIS D. FLEMING
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KYLE D. FORD
MICHAEL M. FORESTER
ADAM FORREST
JACOB P. FOUTZ
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YASMIN J. FRANCIS
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MAI L. E. FRANCO
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CHRISTOPHER M. FRISBIE
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GEORGE C. GREANIAS
CHRISTOPHER R. GREEN
JOHN D. GREEN
NEAL R. GREEN
TERRENCE R. GRIFFIN
BRENDA L. GRUSING
REGINALD GUILLET
GORDON F. GUILLOT
ZACHARY L. HADFIELD
RICHARD E. HAGNER
CHRISTOPHER M. HALL
GERALD S. HALL
ZENIN J. HAMAGUCHI
BRYAN T. HAMILTON
ANTHONY J. HAMMON
LUCAS J. HARAVITCH
KENNETH D. HARDY
EVERETT HARRIS
NANCY K. HARRIS
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SETH R. HARTMANN
JAMES H. HARVEY
SIMEON M. HARVEY
JAMES N. HARVILLE
JACK HATFIELD III
ROBBY A. HAUGH
AUSTIN T. HAYES
PATRICK R. HEIM
JONATHAN M. HEIST
WILLIAM L. HEITZMAN
RUSSELL W. HENNESSEY
HERSCHEL L. HENRY
DEAN K. HERMAN
SHAWN R. HERRICK
DANIEL D. HICKEY
NATHAN L. HICKS
LIESL K. HIMMELBERGER
MATTHEW R. HINZE
ROBERT C. HOFFMAN
GREGORY L. HOLIMAN
DEBORAH L. HOLLAND
BARBARA M. HORNE
DARNELL H. HOWARD
DEMETRIUS D. HOWARD
DAVID H. HOYT
GEORGE W. HUGHBANKS
KEN M. HUGHES
DAVID M. HUNTER
MATTHEW J. HUNTER
SCOTT D. HUNTLEY
WILLIE R. HUTCHINSON
FRANK K. HWANG
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ROSS E. JACKSON
THOMAS P. JACOBS
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JOEL M. JOHNSON
KHALI D. JOHNSON
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JOSEPH M. KAMINSKI
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DAVID F. KEITHAN
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JASON P. KENDZIERSKI
SEAN K. KENEALLY
PHILLIP J. KERBER
BRETT T. KETCHUM
DANIEL K. KILGORE
EZRA Y. KIM
JAMES H. KIM
JAMES E. KING
COLIN M. KINSELLA
JARED R. KITE
BENJAMIN H. KLIMKOWSKI
KRAIG M. KLINE
DUSTIN M. KNAUS
WESLEY N. KNIGHT
DONALD D. KOBAN
WILLIAM L. KOCH
DEREK J. KOCHER
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MAXIM A. KREKOTNEV
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LUCAS J. LEASE
MICHAEL L. LECCLIER
GREGORY M. LECLAIR
AUVIE R. LEE
CHRISTOPHER S. Y. LEE
JAMES A. LEIDENBERG
TRACY B. LEON
JARROD L. LESLIE
WILLIAM C. LEWIS
CHRISTY A. R. LICKLIDER
JENNIFER D. LILES
TOMEEKA LILLY
DONALD W. LINCOLN
GEORGE J. LINDSEY
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DEBBIE C. LOVELADY
ARNIE F. LUCAS III
CHRISTOPHER D. LUNDIN
WESLEY H. LUTHER
JAMES C. MACHADO
JEFFREY N. MACKINNON
MICHAEL A. MADDOX
BRANDY L. MALONE
KELLY L. MARKIN
JAE C. MARQUIS
MICHAEL A. MARTIN
CLARE MARTINEZ
JONATHAN MARTINEZ
KIRSTIN S. MASSEY
JOHN P. MAYO
JOHN J. MCALLISTER
ALTON R. MCCALLUM
CHRISTOPHER B. MCCARVER
MICHAEL K. MCCOY
MICHAEL B. MCCRANIE
MATTHEW W. MCCRAY
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COLIN J. MCELROY
PATRICK M. MCGRATH
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CLINTON C. MEAD
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DEREK W. MEHRTENS
ERIK F. MELENDEZ
JOSHUA G. MENDOZA
NATALIA R. MERCEDES-WILLIAMS
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JACOB I. MEYER
SEAN P. MICHAELSON
EDWARD MIKKELSEN, JR.
JASON C. MILLER
MATTHEW L. MILLER
PATRICK G. MILLER
RYDER S. MILLER
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EDWARD J. MINOR
GARRICK P. MINOR
AZUCENA MONTENEGRO
DUANE A. MONTOYA
CHARLENE MOORE
JOHN F. K. MOORE
BENJAMIN T. MOREHEAD
KYLE V. MOSES
CARDY MOTEN III

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PATRICK R. MUGG
DAVID A. MULLINS
CHRISTOPHER U. MUNAR
KEVIN C. MURNYACK
BRIAN P. MURPHY
JASON P. MURPHY
BRIAN S. MURRAY
JASON M. MUSGROVE
DAVID C. MUSICK
MICHELLE T. MYERS
MICHAEL E. NAAS
JEFFERY S. NASON
TYRONE L. NELSON
SEAN P. NEWCOMB
BRAD A. NEWNUM
DAT T. NGUYEN
VINH Q. NGUYEN
GLIDDEN NIEVES
EDWARD F. NORRIS
STEPHEN M. NOTERY
DONALD J. NUNEMAKER
ROBERTO NUNEZ
RICHARD L. NYGAARD
RICARDO E. OCASIO
RAYMOND W. ODONNELL
GERALD M. ODOWD
PAUL C. OGWO
JASON M. ONEAL
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DARRELL E. PEEK
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BRADLEY K. PIETZYK
BRYAN W. PLASS
MICKEY J. PLETCHER
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LUIS E. PRECIADO
STEVEN E. PRESSLEY
JAMES M. PRICE
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RYAN E. PURDY
JASON W. PYSKA
JASON A. QUASH
MARIO A. QUEVEDO
CARLOS A. RAMOS
ANDREW J. READY
THOMAS E. REDDICK, JR.
MICHAEL R. REDINGTON
ANDREW C. REED
KETTY N. REED
SANDRA E. REEVES
JOHN A. REGAN
CHRISTOPHER P. REILLY
CORY S. REITER
JESUS REYES
ALBERTO J. REYNOSO
BRAD A. RICE
DAVE C. RICHARDS
AMANDA B. RIFFER
ADAM L. RIGGS
ALBERT RIOS
BRADLEY R. RITZEL
JOHN A. RIZZUTO
OMAR M. ROBERTO-CAEZ
CHRISTOPHER C. ROBERTSON
JOHN B. ROBERTSON
STEVEN L. ROBERTSON
DAVID RODRIGUEZ
MINERVA A. RODRIGUEZ
KENNETH W. ROEDL
GUILLERMO ROJAS, JR.
PETE ROONGSANG
MATTHEW T. ROSEN
KRISJAND A. ROTHWEILER
JOHN A. ROUSSEAU
BRYAN A. RUCKNAGEL
RAMON A. RUIZ, JR.
MORGAN R. RUST
JAMES D. RYAN
ALPHIE G. SACHNIK
ANGELICA M. SALAZAR
DAVID SALAZAR
KYLE SALTZMAN
PEDRO R. SANABRIA
PABLO SANCHEZ
KELLY J. SANDERS
GREGORY E. SANDIFER
ERASMO SANDOVAL
PHILLIP J. SANTOLI
JEFFREY J. SANTOS
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KALE D. SAWYER
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BENJAMIN A. SCHNELLER
CLINTON R. SCHOFIELD
DAVID V. SCHULZ
JASON D. SCHWAB
GAVIN D. SCHWAN
BLAKE E. SCHWARTZ
TERI E. SCROGGINS
ELIZABETH A. SEATON
LEWIS F. SEAU
MICHAEL S. SENFT
ZACHARIAH SEPULVEDA
SCOTT A. SEWELL
NICHOLAS J. SHALLCROSS
JESSE L. SHAW, JR.
CHRISTOPHER T. SHERBERT
BRAD K. SHIMATSU
JASON S. SHIN
JARROD S. SHINGLETON
MATTHEW D. SHIRLEY
THOMAS J. SILIO
STEVEN R. SIMMONS, JR.
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ORLANDO C. SIMS
DANIEL M. SINGLETON
THOMAS P. SIRICO
ASHANTI M. SKINNER
RONNIE L. SLACK
CHARLOTTE E. SMART-MCGHEE
DANIEL K. SMIT
JEROMIE D. SMITH
JOSEPH A. SMITH
KEMIELLE D. SMITH
MICHAEL SMITH
OCTAVIA R. SMITH
GAETANO M. SNOW
BRENT SOELBERG
JUNG S. SOH
JUDITH SOTO
PATRICK S. SOUTHERLAND
AMBER SPAIN
CONRAD D. SPANGLER
LOUIS J. STANGLAND
CHRISTOPHER L. STANGLE
JAMES S. STEWART
SEAN A. STEWART
MICHAEL B. STOKES
GLORIA E. STRINGER
NAKIA J. SUMMERS
KELLY K. SUNDERLAND
CHRISTOPHER M. SUTTLES
ERICK C. SUTTON
JOY C. SWANKE
JAYSON L. SWEET
EUGENE SZYMANSKI
MARGARET D. TAAFE-MCMENAMY
ELMER W. TAKASH III
KENNETH S. TAKEHANA
KEVIN R. TANQUARY
RYAN G. TATE
JESUS A. TAVARES, JR.
BRYAN T. TAYLOR
THOMAS W. TAYLOR II
MARCELO C. TEALDI
ELIZABETH A. TEDRICK
ROBERT P. TEXTER
DARREN J. THOMAS
JAMES H. THOMAS
KAI J. THOMPSON
KEVIN G. THOMPSON
ROBERT L. TINDALL
JASON P. TISDALE
PAUL W. TOMLINSON II
WILFORD A. TONEY
ROBERT H. TOPPER, JR.
FELIX TORRES
IVAN TORRES
MICHAEL B. TOWNER
NADIA L. TRAYLOR
SERGIO R. TREJO, JR.
ADAM C. TUMBLIN
JENNIFER M. TUREK
AARON S. TURNER
JAMIESON L. TWIST
TIMOTHY D. TYNER
BENJAMIN K. ULLRICH
MATTHEW P. UPPERMAN
BRYAN M. VADEN
JENNIFER E. VALDIVIA
BENJAMIN J. VANMETER
BRANDON L. VANORDEN
STEPHAN A. VARGA
JORGE E. VARGAS
THOMAS W. VOGAN
ALEXANDER M. VUKCEVIC
TRUNG N. VUONG
DENIS M. WAGNER
ROMELL WARD
JESSICA D. WATSON
WESLEY P. WATSON
SCOTT J. WEEMAN
WILLIAM F. WEILAND
JONATHAN W. WELBORN
SHAIN R. WERTHER
WILLIAM W. WESSLING
FREDERICK J. WEST
TYRONE O. WEST
TRENT M. WESTON
DARRELL T. WHITE
MATTHEW N. WHITE
CLAY T. WHITMAN
VANCE K. WHITT
BENJAMIN T. WILLIAMS
BRENT S. WILLIAMS
DONYEL L. WILLIAMS
KARIF T. WILLIAMS
SONIA S. WILLIAMS
ADLAI W. WILLIAMSON
ERIC N. WILSON
JASON P. WILSON
KENTRELL R. WILSON
DARA L. WINNEY
CHRISTIAN R. WOLLENBURG
SETH M. WOMACK
JUSTINE R. WONG
LOREN Y. WONG
ADAM C. WOODBURY
ERIK J. WRIGHT
ERIK R. WRIGHT
JAMIE R. WRIGHT
BENJAMIN J. WU
KELLY M. YARD
ALEX H. YI
YONG YI
VICTOR M. YINH
PHILIP T. ZAPIEN
JASON A. ZERUTO
BRYAN D. ZESKI
MICHAEL D. ZIBERT
NIKOLAUS ZIEGLER
MATTHEW A. ZIMMERMAN
DANIEL N. ZISA
JEREMY M. ZOLLIN
D010577
D010957
D010386
G010006
G010121
D010648
G001454
D010489
G010092

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

EDWARD C. ADAMS
MICHAEL M. ADAMS
RANDALL J. ADAMS
ALLISON C. AGUILAR
ANTHONY B. AGUILAR
MELISSA A. AGUILAR
MARTIN AGUIRRE
ARNALDO C. ALBORNOZ
BILLY J. ALEXANDER
JASON M. ALEXANDER
WALTER T. ALLARD
JASON D. ALLEN
KIMBERLY N. ALLEN
RONALD M. ALLEN
TIMOTHY L. AMBROSE
MARTIN D. ANDERS
DANIEL J. ANDERSON
JON C. ANDERSON
KARO M. ANDERSON
NICHOLAS K. ANDERSON
PATRICK J. ANDERSON
RICHARD H. ANDERSON
RICHARD S. ANDERSON
GRAYSON F. ANGUS
ADAM D. ANTONINI
ANTHONY APPLEGATE
ALEX A. AQUINO
BAUDELIO ARIAS, JR.
DAMON T. ARMENI
ADAM W. ARMSTRONG
DOUGLAS A. ARMSTRONG
MICHAEL C. ARNONE
DAVID E. ARROYO-BURDETT
NIKOLAS J. ASARO
GEORGE J. ATHANASOPOULOS
JAMES A. ATTAWAY
FREDERICK J. BABAUTA
JUSTIN L. BABCOCK
SEAN M. BADWOUND
STEWART D. BAILEY
MICAH I. BAKER
MARIUS B. BALAS
ANDREW K. BARHAM
JAMES P. BARNHART
ANDREW T. BASQUEZ
CRYSTAL B. BATEY
JAMES A. BATTLE
AARON B. BATY
CHRISTOPHER O. BEAL
STEVEN W. BEARD
ADAM BEATON, JR.
HERBERT F. BECK
MICHAEL F. BECK
CRAIG T. BEESE
SCOTTIE J. BENSON
GEORGE E. BERNDT
TRAVIS BETZ
TIMOTHY P. BIART
RAYMOND H. BIJOLLE
AARON L. BILLINGSLEY
JAMES C. BITHORN
JOSEPH C. BLACK
DAVID W. BLACKWELL
CHRISTIAN D. BLEVINS
KWAME O. BOATENG
JENNIFER J. BOCANEGRA
STEPHAN R. BOLTON
ROBERT E. BONHAM
JEFFREY P. BOTTRELL
JEREMY J. BOUDREAUX
MATTHEW J. BOWMAN
KEVIN L. BOYD
STEPHEN R. BOZOVICH
BRANDON D. BRADLEY
PATRICK M. BRADLEY
JOSEPH W. BRADSHAW

EVAN W. BRAINERD
ROBERT M. BRANDSTETTER
SCOTT L. BRANDT
ELLINORE S. BRANDY
RICARDO BRAVO
JOSEPH O. BREEDLOVE
CHARLES S. BRINK
JONATHAN M. BRITTON
JIM A. BROCKINGTON
CURTIS E. BROOKER
CLINTON E. BROOKS
CLINTON W. BROWN
CODY H. BROWN
DAVID L. BROWN
MARK L. BROWN, JR.
MACKLAND H. BROWNELL
MARQUES A. BRUCE
LARRY BRUEGGEMEYER
DAVID A. BRUNAIS
STEPHEN W. BRUNK
MARK A. BUCK
BRIAN W. BURBANK
JOHN L. BURBANK
JEFFERSON D. BURGES
MEGAN T. BURKE
NEYSA N. BURKES
SEAN C. BURNETT
NATHANAEL O. BURNORE
COREY L. BURNS
THOMAS W. BURNS
CHRISTOPHER L. BURTON
MARK E. BUSH
PAUL S. BUTTON
JOHN W. CAHILL
BRIAN L. CALDWELL
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DAVID R. CAMPBELL
KYLE I. CAMPBELL
NATASHA N. CAMPBELL
JUAN C. CANCEL
DANIEL B. CANNON
JACOB W. CAPPS
YOVANA CARDENAS
STEVEN M. CARMICHAEL
SEAN T. CARMODY
CHRISTIAN A. CARR
THOMAS CARROLL
JAMES E. CARSON, JR.
CHRISTOPHER J. CARTER
CORY J. CARTER
ADAM V. CARUSO
SEAN M. CASE
BILLY B. CASIDAY
PABLO CASTRO
MAX E. CAYLOR
THOMAS CHAE
CHRISTOPHER S. CHAFFIN
NICHOLAS B. CHALLEN
BENJAMIN T. CHANNELS
JESSE R. CHAPIN
DAVID T. CHAPMAN
COLIN D. CHAPPELL
CHAUNCEY M. CHAPPELLE
NORVEN J. CHARLES
ADRIAN M. CHEN
JIMMY T. CHEN
LUIS M. CHESHIRE
TIMYIAN CHEUNG
LUKE T. CHIVERS
HONG N. CHOE
COLLEEN K. CHRIST
PEARL H. CHRISTENSEN
KRISTOPHER P. CHRISTL
JOSHUA T. CHRISTY
THOMAS R. CHURCH
DANIEL J. CICCARELLI
SCOTT D. CLARE
JOSEPH A. CLARK
LEWIS CLARK II
CHARLES W. CLAYPOOL
ADAM C. CMEREK
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GREGORY W. COATS
MICHAEL D. COLBURN
JOHN T. COLLINS
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KENNETH D. A. COOK
MICHAEL D. COOKEY
ASHA S. COOPER
JAMES A. COPP
BRIAN L. CORBIN
JAMES P. CORBIN
WILLIAM B. CORDELL
AVON D. CORNELIUS II
JAMES L. COVINGTON
WARRICK G. CRAIG
JOHN D. CRAVEN
KEVIN E. CRONIN
JACOB M. CROSS
RONALD S. CROWTHER
DAVID M. CULVER
RUSSELL O. CUMMINGS
WILLIAM T. CUNNINGHAM
MATTHEW E. CURL
EDWARD M. CUSTER
ROBERT C. CUTHBERTSON
PAUL A. CUTTS
WADE M. CZAJKOWSKI
MICHAEL G. DABBS
KEVIN E. DAGON
JENNIFER A. DAHL
TODD A. DANA
CLAY E. DANIELS
MORISSE L. DANIELS, SR.
NICHOLAS S. DAUGHERTY
STEVEN C. DAVIES
DAMASIO DAVILA
ANDREW L. DAVIS II
MARVIN D. DAVIS
NANSHANTA B. DAVIS
NATHANIEL M. DAVIS
MATTHEW J. DAY
CASEY A. DEAN
TODD A. DECA
TIMOTHY J. DECKER II
TIMOTHY W. DECKER
RENE M. DELAFUENTE
DUSTIN E. DELCOURE
PAUL N. DELEON
HENSON DELTANG
PHILIP A. DEMME
CHRISTOPHER DENATALE
JONPAUL E. DEPREO
MICHAEL G. DESTEFANO
SCOTT C. DEWITT
JAMIE D. DOBSON
KEVIN S. DODSON
MICHAEL G. DOLAN
JEFFREY M. DONALDSON
DANIEL B. DOWNS
DERRICK G. DRAPER
DERRICK S. DRAPER
MATTHIAS W. DREHER
DENNY D. DRESCH
RAYMOND E. DRESCH
TIMOTHY J. DRISCOLL
DEREK G. DROUIN
ANTHONY G. DUNAT
FRANK R. DUVERGER III
PAILY EAPEN
TROY D. ECK
HAROLD G. EDDY
CHRISTOPHER R. EIDMAN
DEREK J. ELDER
LINDSEY M. ELDER
GREGORY R. ELDRIDGE
DAVID M. ELLIOTT
RICHARD S. ELLIOTT
TRAVIS W. ELOLF
JORDAN D. ENGER
MICHAEL J. ENGLUND
ALAN J. ENKE
VINCENT P. ENRIQUEZ
DEREK E. ENSLOW
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JOHN H. WITHERS
MARCUS P. WONG
BONNIE L. WOOD
BRITTANY Y. WOODS
MATTHEW P. WOOLSEY
JOHN J. WORLAND
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TIMOTHY C. WYCOFF
ANDREW K. YANG
DERRICK A. YOHE
CHAD A. YOUNG
PETER J. YOUNG
MICHAEL E. ZIEGELHOFER
MATTHEW D. ZIOBRO
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IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

ASHLEY A. HOCKYCKO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

JASON A. LANGHAM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

WILL J. CHAMBERS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

PATRICK J. FOX, JR.
RUOHONG LIU
JOEL B. SOLOMON
LESLIE H. TRIPPE