United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 158 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2012 No. 59

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 24, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN ABNEY CULBERSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

MEL WORTMAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to note the passing of a constituent and friend of mine who was a true friend and one of the great leaders of the city of Bremerton, Washington.

Mel Wortman died last month at the age of 91, and he was remembered this past weekend at a service in Bremerton by his family and friends for his wit and for his many enduring personal relationships he developed over decades of working at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, and during the years of service to many organizations in our community.

I knew Mel for most of my life. He was a graduate of my mother's high school, and he always joked that he never would have graduated if she hadn't helped him through math class. He was also a great friend of my father, and they were often enjoying their favorite past time, fishing for trout out on Kitsap Lake. In fact, they had a secret formula that I was hoping Mel would have passed on to me.

Mel served in the Navy in World War II before taking a job at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, eventually rising to be superintendent of Shop 31, which was the machine shop.

Mel's personal advice to me ranged from pointers he gave me when I played sports with his sons, Dave and Gary, to the suggestions he offered when I was running for Congress, and later, as a member of the Defense Appropriation Subcommittee, on important things we could do to make the shipyard in Bremerton function better.

Mr. Speaker, Mel Wortman was one of the remaining members of this Greatest Generation of Americans who selflessly served in World War II and then returned home to raise families and pursue their careers without asking for thanks.

I think it is appropriate once again for us in the House of Representatives to express our thanks to those great Americans as we note the passing of one of their finest, Mel Wortman.

I submit for the RECORD Mel Wortman's obituary as it was published in the Kitsap Sun, noting his wife Jane and the many members of his family who have lost a great patriarch.

OBITUARY PUBLISHED IN THE KITSAP SUN, BREMERTON, WASHINGTON

Melvin David Wortman
July 4, 1920 to March 19, 2012

Veteran

Mel Wortman died at his home on March 19, 2012 surrounded by his family. Mel did a stint in the Navy during World War II and was a longtime resident who retired from PSNS after working his way up to Superintendent of Shop 31. Well known in Kitsap County, Mel was said to be the go-to-guy in Democratic politics and he headed up numerous political campaigns. Mel had a passion for sports and we're just sure he and son Gary are shooting some hoops in heaven. Mel was a Washington State Park Commissioner for 12 years and prided himself on visiting all of the parks in his beloved state.

Mel loved to share details of his family with anyone who would listen. Jane, his patient and loving wife listened to his stories and jokes for the past 72 years and continues to make her home in Bremerton. The Wortman's oldest son, Dave lives in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho with his wife Chrissy. Son Gary, who was an NBA Scout, is deceased.

Their daughter, Janna and her husband Bob reside in Arizona, while their other son Steve and his wife Cindy live in Tacoma.

Mel was proud of his 11 Grandchildren and 16 'Greats' who filled his life with tremendous joy in his later years. A memorial service will be held for Mel at the Bremerton Elks Lodge on April 22 at 1:00 p.m.

Born on July 4, Mel lived a life dedicated to being a great American, he made a difference in the lives of all who knew him. In lieu of flowers, Jane requests that donations be made to Hospice of Kitsap County at 570 Lebo Blvd. Bremerton, WA 98310.

TAXMAGEDDON, JANUARY 1, 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, last week, April 17, was Tax Day, when all hardworking Americans must file their taxes with the Internal Revenue Service. Ironically enough, April 17 was also Tax Freedom Day, the day when Americans earn just about enough earned income to pay off the tax bill for all Federal, State, and local taxes. The first 111 days of the year, everything you and I, and all Americans earn went to fund the United States Federal Government, the same government that wasted $800,000 on a GSA conference with mind readers, commemorative coins, and bike building

Printed on recycled paper.

exercises, and the same government that thought giving half a billion dollars to Solyndra was a good idea.

In 1900, Americans paid about 5.9 percent of their income in taxes, and Tax Freedom Day came about 22 days into the year. It is a far cry, my colleagues, from what we have to endure in taxes today.

If you think 111 days to reach Tax Freedom Day is excessive, just wait till next year. We are on the cusp of a tax Armageddon. I like to call it a Taxmageddon. It's scheduled to hit on January 1, 2013. It will be the largest tax increase in memory, possibly ever, a $494 billion tax increase in 1 year.

When we talk about taxes, we usually project the increase or decrease in revenue over a 10-year budget horizon. But this $494 billion tax increase isn't over a 10-year budget window; it is an immediate massive tax increase in 1 year.

Where do these tax increases come from? There are a number of tax provisions that are set to expire at the end of this year. Unless action is taken to extend these provisions or make them permanent, it will lead to an unheard of tax increase in January.

About one-third of the tax increases will come from the expiration of the Bush tax cuts from 2001 and 2003. These tax cuts reduced the marginal rates for all Americans and expanded the child tax credit, reduced the marriage penalty, and increased the tax breaks for education costs. The majority of the tax benefits in these tax cuts were targeted towards the middle and lower income tax folks.

About a quarter of the tax increases will come from the expiration of temporary payroll tax cuts that were created just 2 years ago.

Another quarter of the tax increases will come from the expiration of the alternative minimum tax. With all of this talk about creating the Buffett rule, the President seems to forget that we already have the Buffett rule in the AMT. The AMT was created in 1969 to ensure that 155 high-income households paying zero Federal income taxes would pay income taxes. Unfortunately, it was never indexed to inflation. So more and more Americans become entangled in the AMT, and today the AMT threatens to hit most Americans in the middle class and is regularly patched to protect taxpayers, but never repealed. Unless it is dealt with, it will impact millions of middle class taxpayers.

In 2013, we get a brand new tax, courtesy of ObamaCare. There will be a 3.8 percent tax on wages and salaries over $250,000 and investment income over that same amount. While this seems like it won't affect most people, this tax can apply to unearned income, like capital gains from selling your home, which will affect middle class families when they sell property. Like the AMT tax penalty, this tax is not indexed to inflation, which means that more and more Americans will be affected by this tax over time.

We'll also see the return of the Death Tax to its pre-Bush levels, when the maximum rate can be 55 percent of your estate. I believe there should be no taxation without respiration; that is, you have to be breathing. It is wrong to tax a business or a family farm when it's transferred from parent to child. This tax has hurt family farms and family businesses where children have been forced to sell the business or farm because they could not afford to pay the Death Tax.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke has referred to all these expiring tax provisions as a ''massive fiscal cliff.''

When we talk about taxes, we usually project the increases over 10 years, but this is going to be immediate in the year 2013, January 1.

There has been a failure of leadership from the White House. The President's budget is full of election-year gimmicks and unwillingness to try to address the upcoming Taxmageddon. Instead, the President doubles-down on his election year rhetoric, he doesn't address expiring taxes, and instead proposes a slew of new taxes on American companies.

You do not raise taxes during a recession. Raising taxes will halt what little economic growth we had over the last 3 years and return us to the days of double-digit unemployment.

SAN JACINTO DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the 176th anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto. Last Saturday, the State of Texas celebrated April 21, 1836, when Texas forces led by General Sam Houston dealt a decisive blow to General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna.

Several weeks after the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence in March 1836, roughly 900 members of the Texas Army overpowered a much larger Mexican Army in a surprise attack.

Texas soldiers ran and shouted, ''Remember the Alamo'' and ''Remember Goliad.'' Some 700 Mexican soldiers were killed and 730 captured, while only 9 Texans died. General Santa Anna was captured the following day. He signed the peace treaties that ordered the Mexican Army to leave Texas, paving the way for the Republic of Texas to become an independent country and later a State in our great country.

The battle was memorialized along Buffalo Bayou and San Jacinto River with the San Jacinto Monument in east Harris County. It is in our congressional district.

God bless Texas and God bless the United States of America.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Reverend Joel Osteen, Lakewood Church, Houston, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Father, we thank You that You show Your goodness and Your favor to the United States of America and to those who govern it. We ask that You bless this House of Representatives and each Member who serves in it. Help these lawmakers to search their hearts so that they may serve with dignity and honor and that through them our Nation will achieve the destiny that You have set before us. Give them wisdom as they make good decisions, courage that they will hold fast to Your truth, and compassion that all should prosper from their laws.

We receive Your presence here today. Father, we pray that these lawmakers will remain mindful of You and that they will honor You in everything they do here.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SABLAN 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND JOEL OSTEEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 1 minute.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great amount of privilege today to welcome two humble

spirits in Pastor Joel Osteen and Co-Pastor Victoria Osteen, and to recognize their entire family and their delightful children, Alexandra and Jonathan. Two humble spirits.

As was reflected in his prayer, Joel Osteen has taught us to embrace God's grace and mercy, and for those who will listen, to stand in the sunlight of joy as one looks toward the hopefulness of the future.

I am delighted that Lakewood started in a feedstock store in the 18th Congressional District. The story is told that there were spiders and a lot of dust, organized by his wonderful father, John Osteen, and his mother, Dodie Osteen, two who loved each other dearly but really loved the Lord.

Out of that wonderful union came five children. And out of that wonderment, as John Osteen preached for over 40 years, as the love of his wife, Dodie Osteen, provided a comfort at his side, they built a wonderful church called the Oasis of Love.

But John was taken from us suddenly in 1999. A young man by the name of Joel was at school. But, knowing how much he loved his family, he came home, just happening, a month or so ago or a few years before, working with his father's ministry, and gave a sermon for the first time one week before his father died. Maybe it was the father telling the son that now it is your time.

As we look to the future, Pastor Joel Osteen, who has published many books, continues to be a humble spirit, is known to have the largest and most growing church in American history and, as well, continues with a humble spirit. His phrase that ''Our God is a good God who desires to bless those who are obedient and faithful to him'' is one that we're reminded of. He continues to ensure that those who are in need have a sense of inspiration and hope, and he continues to preach this word around the world.

He asks for all of us, and he asks for America and the world, to become all that God created you to be, and continues to emphasize that we are better than we think. As he was the product of John and Dodie Osteen, he is now, along with his wife and along with his mother, continuing to shine a light.

We're delighted to have him today because we need a light in America. As he reaches those who are seeking light, we ask Pastor Joel Osteen, in his books, in his message, to continue to bless us. He is, in fact, someone who warmly says: America is a great country, but we're better when we work together.

Thank you, Pastor Osteen, for keeping the dream alive, that of your father and mother, of a church that was started in 1959. Thank you as well for opening the doors of your church to everyone that would come. But more importantly, every background, race, color, or creed is welcome in those pews, now some 16,000. And that was a former basketball stadium, or arena, but yet now people come and worship.

I'm delighted to host Pastor Joel Osteen and his co-pastor, his wife, Victoria Osteen, for what they are doing not only for their church and their members, but really what they're doing for harmony and the spirit of America.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the achievements of a native Houstonian Joel Osteen, his wife of 21 years Victoria Osteen, as well as, Joel's parents John and Dodie Osteen. Their Church Lakewood was established in 1959 in my district the 18th Congressional District in Houston, Texas.

Joel was born in Houston on March 5, 1965 and has become an internationally known televangelist, theologian, speaker and writer.

He was born into a family dedicated to serving their community. In 1959, six years before his birth, Joel's parents, John and Dodie Osteen, founded the Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas. Joel bore witness to his parents' commitment to the church and the community that they served.

Joel has married a woman who shares his level of commitment. His wife Victoria is also his co-pastor and together they have two children Alexandra and Jonathan.

John Osteen was not only a founder but also the Pastor of Lakewood Church and as the years progressed he along with Dodie was able to develop a loyal local following. John was a prolific writer and authored 45 books and his wife, Dodie joined him in his passion for writing. She also published a book which described her battle with metastic cancer of the liver. Dodie's survival was a miracle and a blessing for all who heard her story.

Joel, who has always been strongly committed to his family, left for university; however, he returned home early and continued to help his family with the church. Joel had found his calling in life, and gave his first sermon one week before his father's death. That moment set his future destiny—he was called to pastor Lakewood Church.

Before that, Joel believed the next step for the church was television and he worked without ceasing behind cameras and as a producer of the church's broadcasts. Young Joel had a vision and the Osteens, as a family, worked towards that vision to bring their church into the homes of millions of people around the world as a conduit to deliver the word of the Lord.

In 1999, Joel reached his 34th birthday and in that year he along with his family had already celebrated many successes. Sadly, they also had to come together that year to mourn the loss of their patriarch, John Osteen, who died of a heart attack.

At the time of his father's death, Joel had to decide what to do next. He had spent his life dedicated to supporting the mission of the Lakewood Church. He could have chosen a different path in life but had remained steadfast in working with the congregation for so long.

Instead of leaving the church upon his father's death, Joel decided to pick up the torch lit by his parents and stepped into his father's shoes as Pastor of Lakewood Church. The rest is history.

Within the space of 9 years, Joel has transformed the Church and left his mark on history. According to reports, Lakewood Church under Joel Osteen's leadership has become America's largest and fastest growing church. The Osteen family has lived their vision; they are indeed being seen in millions of homes around the world.

Currently Joe's services can be seen in nearly 100 countries. Lakewood Church is nondenominational—there are no crosses or other visual representations of Jesus—instead, the focus is on the message as delivered by Joel and his co-pastors. He wants to teach people on the redemption of Jesus Christ.

Joel has been preaching to millions of people around the world. He has a strong message of unity and encourages diversity and acceptance. Joel is arguably the most popular preacher in the country. Lakewood Church is the largest congregation in the United States, averaging more than 43,500 in attendance per week. The congregation in Houston meets in a 16,000-seat former sports arena.

On any given Sunday over 7 million people watch his services. And his ability to embrace technology has allowed even more viewers to witness his services. Currently the church has 48 million podcasts with over 1 million people downloading their podcasts every week.

I commend Joel Osteen, his wife Victoria, his family and his Lakewood Church team ministry who have worked together to put forward a message that has engaged the hearts and minds of millions.

JOEL'S STORY

Joel Osteen is currently in negotiations with a major network to anchor a primetime reality series based on the inspirational themes of his Sunday sermons. The show will orginate from Lakewood Church and tell the stories of ordinary people meeting extraordinary challenges.

Joel Osteen is a native Houstonian and the Pastor of Lakewood Church, which according to Church Growth Today is America's largest and fastest growing church.

On July 16, 2005 after completing $95 million in renovations, Joel moved Lakewood Church into its new 16,000-seat home—the former Compaq Center. It is the largest regularly-used worship center in the United States.

Each week Joel delivers God's message of hope and encouragement to more than 38,000 attendees.

According to Nielsen Media Research, Joel is the most watched inspirational figure in America.

His weekly sermon is broadcast into every U.S. television market where it is viewed by 7 million Americans each week and more than 20 million each month. His weekly broadcast is also seen in almost 100 nations around the world.

In 2004, his first book, Your Best Life Now, was released by Time Warner debuting at the top of the New York Times Bestsellers List and quickly rising to #1. It remained on the New York Times Bestsellers List for more than 2 years and has sold more than 4 million copies.

Joel was named as one of Barbara Walters' ''10 Most Fascinating People of 2006'' and he was selected as the ''Most Influential Christian

in 2006'' by the readers of Church Report Magazine.

PREPARED FOR GOD'S CALLING

Joel, the son of John Osteen, a highly respected minister of the Gospel and the founder of Lakewood Church, attended Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he studied radio and television communications.

In 1982, Joel returned to Houston and founded Lakewood's television ministry where he produced John Osteen's televised sermons for 17 years until January 1999 when his father passed away suddenly from a heart attack.

For many years, John Osteen encouraged Joel to preach, but he always declined preferring to work behind the scenes. But, in early 1999 Joel felt compelled to accept his father's invitation and he preached his first sermon on January 17th of that year. Little did anyone know that would be the last Sunday of John Osteen's life. Two weeks later, Joel began preaching and later that year was installed as the new Senior Pastor of Lakewood Church.

A NEW VISION FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Almost immediately, weekly attendance began to grow at an extraordinary rate and in 2005, Joel moved Lakewood Church into its present location, the former Compaq Center, a 16,000-seat arena that was once home to the Houston Rockets professional basketball team. Now, with his wife Victoria, and the leadership staff at Lakewood, the innovative church is poised for the new millennium.

Joel's extraordinary success can be found in his core message: ''That our God is a good God who desires to bless those who are obedient and faithful to Him through Jesus Christ.''

It is Joel's deepest desire that his own life be an example of that principle and that everyone who hears this message of hope and encouragement would choose to accept God's goodness and mercy and to become all that God wants them to be.

JOEL'S BACKGROUND

Born in Houston, Texas, Osteen married Victoria L. Iloff on April 4, 1987. They have two children, Jonathan and Alexandra.

Joel, son of John and Dolores (Dodie) Pilgrim, is one of five children. His older siblings, Paul, Lisa, and Tamara, and his younger sister, April, are also involved in full-time ministry.

Joel's half-brother Justin does missionary work out of New York.

Joel's father, John Osteen, a former Southern Baptist pastor who became Charismatic in the late 1950s, founded Lakewood Church on Mother's Day, 1959.

Osteen's father developed Lakewood into a body of approximately 6,000 members with an active television ministry, conferences, missionary support and food distribution.

Currently, Osteen and several Lakewood Church personnel travel across the nation, presenting programs in large arenas. The event, titled ''A Night of Hope,'' includes worship music led by the church's music ministry, a testimony by Joel's mother Dodie and a sermon from Osteen. In 2007, the tour expanded to include stops in several other countries, including Canada, England, Northern Ireland and Israel.

MISSION/VISION OF LAKEWOOD

LAKEWOOD CHURCH

Vision Paragraph: Lakewood seeks to become a vibrant community for God growing deeper in faith, knowledge, love and relationship with Him. We desire to express the spirit of Jesus through the individual members of the body; through uplifting public worship and intimate small group fellowship; and through committed prayer and dedication to God's will. We strive to offer a welcoming environment for truth-seekers irrespective of knowledge, experience, and background. We want to follow God wherever He leads to make a difference in others' lives by identifying individual talents and preparing people for kingdom service locally, nationally and globally. We desire to do this with humility and love giving God the glory!

Community: God wants me to be a MEMBER of His family—This is the purpose of fellowship. Following Christ is not just a matter of believing; it also includes belonging. The Christian life is not a solo act. God has given us the church as a spiritual family for our own benefit. Your are members of God's very own family . . . and you belong in God's household with every other Christian (Ephesians 2:19).

Loving God: God wants me to be a MAGNIFIER of His name—We are called to worship God. O Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together (Psalm 34.3). There is an inborn urge to worship in every human being. If we don't worship God, we will find a replacement. We may worship our job, family, money, a sport, or even ourselves. That is why the very first commandment says. ''Thou shalt have no other god's before Me.'' (Exodus 20:3)

Loving Others: God wants me to be a MESSENGER of His love—Once we have been born again, we become messengers of the Good News to others. It is part of the job description for every believer. For God was in Christ, restoring the world to himself, no longer counting men's sins against them but blotting them out. This is the wonderful message He has given us to tell others. We are Christ's ambassadors. God is using us to speak to you: we beg you, as though Christ himself were here pleading with you, receive the love He offers you—be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:19–20).

Loving Others: God wants me to be a MINISTER of His grace—A responsibility of every Christian is service. God expects us to use the gifts, talents, and opportunities He gives us to benefit others. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms (1 Peter 4:10).

Imitating Christ: God wants me to be a MODEL of his character—The goal of discipleship is becoming just like Christ. For God knew His people in advance, and He chose them to become like His Son (Romans 8:29). In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul describes specific areas where we are to model the character of Christ . . . set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity. Notice that maturity is not measured by one's learning but by one's lifestyle.

USC HONORS COLLEGE NAMED TOP HONORS COLLEGE IN NATION

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, based upon their rigorous curriculum, retention and graduation rates, honors housing, study abroad programs, and enrichment opportunities for students, the University of South Carolina Honors College was recently named the number one honors program by the Public University Honors organization. This achievement will be published in ''A Review of 50 Public University Honors Programs'' later this month.

The University of South Carolina Honors College was established in 1978 and has more than 8,000 alumni spread across the world. Since its founding, USC Honors College students have won over 363 national awards, including the Rhodes, Marshall, Goldwater, and others.

The 2011 incoming Honors College class had an average SAT score of 1427 and an average weighted GPA of 4.61. Congratulations, Dr. Steve Lynn, dean of the Honors College, and university president, Harris Pastides, on their leadership and accomplishments.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

□ 1410

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF WE THE PEOPLE

(Mr. SABLAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, this year we celebrate the 25th anniversary of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution. Since We the People began in 1987, more than 30 million high school students and 90,000 teachers have participated in this valuable program that promotes the understanding of the constitutional principles that shape and guide our Nation and instills a sense of civic responsibility in young people.

This year, more than 1,000 students from every part of our country will take part in the National Finals here in Washington. The competition will test students' knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, showcasing their intelligence, determination, and teamwork.

I want to recognize 24 exceptionally talented and hardworking students from Saipan Southern High School in the Northern Mariana Islands who return to the Finals as repeat regional champions. Working together and striving for excellence are defining traits of this time. I congratulate them and their teachers and coaches, and wish them all success in this year's We the People competition.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHUCK COLSON

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, Chuck Colson, a former Nixon administration lawyer, founder of Prison Fellowship, and a good friend, passed away.

I first got to know Colson through his incredible ministry. I knew of his

time serving in Maxwell prison in Alabama, and after he was released, I invited him, as a young State legislator in Pennsylvania, to come and speak to a dinner in my district. I had 535 people show up. He spoke and shared the concept that he had gotten as he served in prison of this idea of Prison Fellowship.

He asked me and another fellow to go up to a couple of Federal prisons in Pennsylvania and select four prisoners to bring to Washington for the first time of this group, and I did. I went to Lewisburg and Allenwood, met over six weekends with the little Christian fellowship in those prisons, and they selected two from each prison. One was a bank robber, a hijacker, a labor union racketeer, and a drug dealer.

And without guards, the prison officials permitted me to drive them to Washington. We dropped them off here, left them for a week, and then I came and picked them up and took them back. But this idea of Prison Fellowship started back then. Chuck, when he would speak to me many times, would call me his first prison volunteer.

It was a wonderful ministry. Chuck is going to be greatly missed. Chuck Colson's story is really one of grace, grace that was given to him, that he worked tirelessly to spread across the Nation and across the world. He will be sorely missed.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY IN FEDERAL CONTRACTING ACT

(Mr. GOSAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, this House has a critical opportunity to reform the Federal contracting process, save the taxpayers billions of dollars, and spur job creation. Last Thursday, I introduced the Fiscal Responsibility in Federal Contracting Act to suspend the Davis-Bacon Act for 10 years.

The Davis-Bacon Act requires the Department of Labor to, essentially, set wage rates for workers on Federal construction projects. The metrics used to come up with these wages are deeply flawed and inflate the labor costs of Federal construction projects by 22 percent.

Suspending this act, as Presidents of both parties have done in the past, would save the taxpayers billions per year and empower Federal contractors to employ more people on their projects. Imagine getting five Federal projects for the price of four. That's a win/win for the U.S. taxpayer and construction workers.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this important reform bill by cosponsoring H.R. 4403.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 24, 2012.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 24, 2012 at 12:45 p.m.:

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 4348.

Senate requests a conference with the House and appoints conferees.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1630

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS) at 4 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO CORRECT ERRONEOUS SURVEY, COCONINO NATIONAL FOREST, ARIZONA

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1038) to authorize the conveyance of two small parcels of land within the boundaries of the Coconino National Forest containing private improvements that were developed based upon the reliance of the landowners in an erroneous survey conducted in May 1960, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1038

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF LAND TO CORRECT ERRONEOUS SURVEY, COCONINO NATIONAL FOREST, ARIZONA.

(a) CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Agriculture may convey by quitclaim deed all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the two parcels of land described in subsection (b) to a person or legal entity that represents (by power of attorney) the majority of landowners with private property adjacent to the two parcels. These parcels are within the boundaries of the Coconino National Forest and contain private improvements that were developed based upon the reliance of the landowners in an erroneous survey conducted in May 1960.

(b) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The two parcels of land authorized for conveyance under subsection (a) consist of approximately 2.67 acres described in the Bureau of Land Management's Survey Plat titled Subdivision and Metes and Bounds Surveys in secs. 28 and 29, T. 20 N., R. 7 E., Gila and Salt River Meridian approved February 2, 2010, as follows:

(1) Lot 2, sec. 28, T. 20 N., R. 7 E., Gila and Salt River Meridian, Coconino County, Arizona.

(2) Lot 1, sec. 29, T. 20 N., R. 7 E., Gila and Salt River Meridian, Coconino County, Arizona.

(c) CONSIDERATION.—

(1) AMOUNT OF CONSIDERATION.—As consideration for the conveyance of the two parcels under subsection (a), the person or legal entity that represents (by power of attorney) the majority of landowners with private property adjacent to the parcels shall pay to the Secretary consideration in the amount of $20,000.

(2) DEPOSIT.—The Secretary shall deposit the consideration received under this subsection in a special account in the fund established under Public Law 90–171 (commonly known as the Sisk Act; 16 U.S.C. 484a).

(3) USE.—The deposited funds shall be available to the Secretary, without further appropriation and until expended, for acquisition of land in the National Forest System.

(d) REVOCATION OF ORDERS.—Any public orders withdrawing any of the Federal land from appropriation or disposal under the public land laws are revoked to the extent necessary to permit conveyance of the Federal land under subsection (a).

(e) WITHDRAWAL OF FEDERAL LAND.—Subject to valid existing rights, the Federal land authorized for conveyance under subsection (a) is withdrawn from all forms of entry and appropriation under the public land laws, location, entry, and patent under the mining laws, and operation of the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws until the date which the conveyance is completed.

(f) OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The conveyance authorized by subsection (a) shall be subject only to those surveys and clearances as needed to protect the interests of the United States.

(g) DURATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority provided under this section shall terminate three years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. And for some obvious reasons, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR), the sponsor of this bill that solves some real problems, for the introduction of this particular bill.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my legislation, H.R. 1038, legislation that settles a Federal land boundary dispute in the Mountainaire subdivision in Coconino County, Arizona. This legislation is a commonsense solution to an incomprehensible Federal land situation.

In 1961, the Federal Government conducted a survey in which several acres of the United States Forest Service land were misidentified as private property. It was not until 2007, when the Federal Government contracted another private survey, that the mistakes were realized, and the residents of the Mountainaire neighborhood were informed of these errors.

Until the 2007 survey, many of these residents had maintained these parcels and had developed them as their own for years and, in some cases, decades. In essence, the Federal Government seized lands that residents had maintained, developed, and paid taxes on for years.

So what does this mean?

On some of these parcels, the revised boundary goes right through the portions of the residents' homes, literally right through people's homes. Can you imagine the Forest Service, if they told you we own half of your living room?

Questions associated with the land ownership have plummeted property values in the neighborhood and prevented a number of owners from selling their homes.

For years, the residents of this neighborhood have tried to work individually with the Forest Service to settle the situation administratively. It did not work. So I put forth this legislation to solve the problem immediately.

H.R. 1038 authorizes the Forest Service to convey all rights, titles, and interests in approximately 2.67 acres of the Coconino National Forest to the homeowners. It will provide much-needed relief to my constituents in the Mountainaire subdivision in Coconino County.

In exchange for the land, the homeowners pay a fee. The $20,000, required in the bill, which was agreed to by all parties, including representatives from the local national forest, is based on precedence, the Northern Arizona Land Exchange legislation. This legislation pertained to a small piece of property within the same county.

Frankly, I do not believe these constituents should have to pay anything to retain property rights on land they have developed and paid taxes on as property owners for decades. However, I have agreed to this compromise, a compromise agreed upon by all parties, because my constituents need this situation fixed now.

The Forest Service does not want to own these people's living rooms, and the property owners certainly don't want to share their homes or yards with the Forest Service. This bill is a no-brainer. Everyone supports it, including the administration.

Before I conclude, I want to thank the residents of the Mountainaire neighborhood and Coconino County. They worked with my office to put together a video, to call members of the committee, and to advocate on behalf of this bill. Without this teamwork, we would not have garnered unanimous support at the committee level and would not be voting on this bill today.

I would also like to thank Chairmen HASTINGS and BISHOP and their staffs for pushing this bill forward. While this bill affects a small amount of land, it is vital to the livelihoods of my constituents that are affected.

It is not often that Congress gets the opportunity to take up noncontroversial legislation like H.R. 1038. I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation and relieve my constituents of this financially burdensome situation.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, this bill corrects a survey error made in the 1960s. The landowners will be required to pay $20,000 for these two parcels. We have no objections to Congressman GOSAR's legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. We have no other speakers. I'd ask if there are other speakers on your side.

Ms. TSONGAS. We have no other speakers.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I am ready to close if you're ready to yield back.

Ms. TSONGAS. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, as has been said, this is a problem. It's sad that it has to come all the way to the Congress to actually solve this problem, but it is being solved; and I appreciate the gentleman from Arizona's hard work in trying to help his constituents out.

I would encourage our Members to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1038, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

SPECIAL RULES FOR INYO NATIONAL FOREST LAND EXCHANGE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2157) to facilitate a land exchange involving certain National Forest System lands in the Inyo National Forest, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2157

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

SECTION 1. SPECIAL RULES FOR INYO NATIONAL FOREST LAND EXCHANGE.

(a) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT LANDS OUTSIDE BOUNDARIES OF INYO NATIONAL FOREST.—In any land exchange involving the conveyance of certain National Forest System land located within the boundaries of Inyo National Forest in California, as shown on the map titled ''Federal Parcel'' and dated June 2011, the Secretary of Agriculture may accept for acquisition in the exchange certain non-Federal lands in California lying outside the boundaries of Inyo National Forest, as shown on the maps titled ''DWP Parcel – Interagency Visitor Center Parcel'' and ''DWP Parcel – Town of Bishop Parcel'' and dated June 2011, if the Secretary determines that acquisition of the non-Federal lands is desirable for National Forest System purposes.

(b) CASH EQUALIZATION PAYMENT; USE.—In an exchange described in subsection (a), the Secretary of Agriculture may accept a cash equalization payment in excess of 25 percent. Any such cash equalization payment shall be deposited into the account in the Treasury of the United States established by Public Law 90–171 (commonly known as the Sisk Act; 16 U.S.C. 484a) and shall be made available to the Secretary for the acquisition of land for addition to the National Forest System.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to grant the Secretary of Agriculture new land exchange authority. This section modifies the use of land exchange authorities already available to the Secretary as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I, again, ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. This is another good bill that solves a problem that should have been solved at another level, and to introduce it I would yield such time as he may consume to the sponsor, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON).

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise today in support of my legislation, H.R. 2157.

I want to thank Chairman HASTINGS and Ranking Member MARKEY, as well as Subcommittee Chairman BISHOP and Ranking Member GRIJALVA, for giving my legislation a fair hearing and moving the bill through the committee.

Mr. Speaker, the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area is located in the northern half of my district in the eastern

Sierra Mountains. Mammoth provides between 10 and 30 percent of the total employment in Mono County, and it's a primary recreation destination for tourists all throughout California and the United States. Each winter, Mammoth sees an average of 1.3 million visitors.

□ 1640

These visitors pump vital money into the local economy by populating hotels, motels, restaurants, and stores throughout the region.

Tourism is the lifeblood of the eastern Sierra. Mammoth has operated on a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service since 1953. The base area of the mountain is aging rapidly and is in need of renovation and redevelopment in order to provide a safer, more enjoyable experience for visitors to Mammoth Mountain; however, these renovations are difficult to achieve under the terms of the special use permit.

Since 1998, Mammoth Mountain has been working with the Forest Service to complete a land exchange between their main base parcel and other desired Forest Service acquisitions. These acquisitions include high-resource value lands in the Inyo, El Dorado, Stanislaus, and Plumas National Forests. The exchange would allow the main base to undergo significant and needed renovations.

My legislation is meant to supplement and codify this agreement. It is needed for two reasons:

Number one, the two parcels that the Forest Service wants are outside Inyo National Forest boundaries. Both parcels are currently leased by the Inyo National Forest from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power;

Number two, there's more value in the Mammoth Mountain parcel than in all the land parcels exchanged in total. So Mammoth needs legislation for permission to pay a cash equalization to the Federal Government that will be used for future forest acquisition.

The agreement is widely supported by the local community because residents, business owners, local governments understand the great value of having Mammoth Mountain in their community. Besides jobs and recreation, Mammoth supports a significant portion of the tax base providing needed revenue throughout the region.

We've received numerous letters of support from community members, including those from Duane Hazard, chair of the Mono County Board of Supervisors; Vikki Bauer, member of the Mono County Board of Supervisors; the Mono Lake Committee; the Eastern Sierra Land Trust; and the Mammoth Lakes Town Council.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving my bill time on the floor. Mammoth Mountain has been a good steward of the environment, a solid partner in economic vitality for the region, and an honest party in negotiations with the Forest Service. This land exchange will be mutually beneficial for all parties involved, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2157.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TSONGAS. H.R. 2157 provides for a land exchange between the United States Forest Service and the Mammoth Mountain Ski Area. We applaud Congressman MCKEON for this legislation and support the passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. This is another great bill. I urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2157.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

IDAHO WILDERNESS WATER RESOURCES PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2050) to authorize the continued use of certain water diversions located on National Forest System land in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness in the State of Idaho, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2050

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 ''Idaho Wilderness Water Resources Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF EXISTING WATER DIVERSIONS IN FRANK CHURCH-RIVER OF NO RETURN WILDERNESS AND SELWAY-BITTERROOT WILDERNESS, IDAHO.

(a) AUTHORIZATION FOR CONTINUED USE.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall issue a special use authorization to the owners of a water storage, transport, or diversion facility (in this section referred to as a ''facility'') located on National Forest System land in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness for the continued operation, maintenance, and reconstruction of the facility if the Secretary determines that—

(1) the facility was in existence on the date on which the land upon which the facility is located was designated as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System (in this section referred to as ''the date of designation'');

(2) the facility has been in substantially continuous use to deliver water for the beneficial use on the owner's non-Federal land since the date of designation;

(3) the owner of the facility holds a valid water right for use of the water on the owner's non-Federal land under Idaho State law, with a priority date that predates the date of designation; and

(4) it is not practicable or feasible to relocate the facility to land outside of the wilderness and continue the beneficial use of water on the non-Federal land recognized under State law.

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

(1) REQUIRED TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—In a special use authorization issued under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(A) allow use of motorized equipment and mechanized transport for operation, maintenance, or reconstruction of a facility, if the Secretary determines that—

(i) the use is necessary to allow the facility to continue delivery of water to the non-Federal land for the beneficial uses recognized by the water right held under Idaho State law; and

(ii) the use of nonmotorized equipment and nonmechanized transport is impracticable or infeasible; and

(B) preclude use of the facility for the storage, diversion, or transport of water in excess of the water right recognized by the State of Idaho on the date of designation.

(2) DISCRETIONARY TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—In a special use authorization issued under subsection (a), the Secretary may—

(A) require or allow modification or relocation of the facility in the wilderness, as the Secretary determines necessary, to reduce impacts to wilderness values set forth in section 2 of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131) if the beneficial use of water on the non-Federal land is not diminished; and

(B) require that the owner provide a reciprocal right of access across the non-Federal property, in which case, the owner shall receive market value for any right-of-way or other interest in real property conveyed to the United States, and market value may be paid by the Secretary, in whole or in part, by the grant of a reciprocal right-of-way, or by reduction of fees or other costs that may accrue to the owner to obtain the authorization for water facilities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, again we have a bill that does a great job in solving a problem that should have been solved a long time ago, especially if the Senate would ever listen to it.

To introduce his bill, I would like to yield such time as he may consume to the sponsor of the bill, the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON).

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank the gentleman from Utah for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2050, the Idaho Wilderness Water Resources Protection Act.

This bipartisan, noncontroversial legislation is a technical fix intended to enable the Forest Service to authorize and permit existing historical water diversions within Idaho wilderness.

Last Congress, one of my constituents came to me for help with a problem. The Middle Fork Lodge has a water diversion within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Area that existed before the wilderness area was established and is protected under statute. The diversion was beginning to leak and was in desperate need of repairs to ensure that it did not threaten the environment and watershed, but it turned out the Forest Service did not have the authority to issue the lodge a permit to make the necessary repairs.

As we looked at this issue, we discovered that the Forest Service lacked the authority throughout both the Frank Church Wilderness area, of which there are 22 known water developments, and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, where there are three. These diversions are primarily used to support irrigation and minor hydropower generation for use on non-Federal lands. While the critical situation at the Middle Fork Lodge brought this issue to my attention, it is obvious that this problem is larger than just one diversion. At some point in the future, all 25 of these existing diversions will need maintenance or repair work done to ensure their integrity.

H.R. 2050 authorizes the Forest Service to issue special use permits for all qualifying historic water systems in these wilderness areas. I believe this is important that we get ahead of this problem and ensure the Forest Service has the tools necessary to manage these lands.

For these reasons, I've introduced H.R. 2050. The legislation, which was passed by the House last Congress, allows the Forest Service to issue the required special use permits to owners of historic water systems and sets out specific criteria for doing so. Providing this authority will ensure that existing water diversions can be properly maintained and repaired when necessary and preserves beneficial use for private property owners who hold water rights under State law.

I have deeply appreciated the cooperation of the Forest Service in addressing this problem. Not only have they communicated with me the need to find a systemwide solution to this issue, but at my request, they drafted this legislation to ensure that it only impacts specific targeted historical diversions—those with valid water rights that cannot feasibly be relocated outside of the wilderness area.

H.R. 2050 is bipartisan and noncontroversial. I know of no opposition to this bill. It is intended as a simple, reasonable solution to a problem that I think we can all agree should be solved as quickly as possible. I'm encouraged that the committee held hearings on this bill, and I am hopeful that we can move it through the legislative process without delay so that the necessary maintenance to these diversions may be completed before the damage is beyond repair.

I thank the gentleman from Utah for yielding this time to me.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TSONGAS. This legislation provides commonsense access to maintain water facilities within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness area. These water features were present prior to the congressional designation of Wilderness and are necessary to protect individual water rights in the State. We applaud Chairman SIMPSON for his legislation and support the passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Again, this is an issue that has been recognized and is a solution that Mr. SIMPSON has presented, and I urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2050.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

□ 1650

RELEASE OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST AND USE CONDITIONS, COOK COUNTY AIRPORT, COOK COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2947) to provide for the release of the reversionary interest held by the United States in certain land conveyed by the United States in 1950 for the establishment of an airport in Cook County, Minnesota.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2947

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

SECTION 1. RELEASE OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST AND USE CONDITIONS, COOK COUNTY AIRPORT, COOK COUNTY, MINNESOTA.

(a) RELEASE OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting on behalf of the United States, shall release, without consideration—

(1) the conditions imposed on the use of the parcel of land originally conveyed by the Secretary pursuant to section 16 of the Federal Airport Act (Act of May 13, 1946, ch. 251, 60 Stat. 170) to the State of Minnesota by deed executed May 31, 1950, for the establishment of an airport in Cook County, Minnesota; and

(2) the reversionary interest retained by the United States in connection with such conditions.

(b) INSTRUMENT OF RELEASE.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall execute and file in the appropriate office a deed of release, amended deed, or other appropriate instrument reflecting the release of the reversionary interest and conditions under subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Once again, we have a problem that should easily be corrected and a bill that does that.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. CRAVAACK) to explain his particular piece of legislation.

Mr. CRAVAACK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2947.

This straightforward, commonsense bill will remedy an unintentional consequence of the restrictive language of the original deed set in Cook County, Minnesota.

In the 1950s, the Secretary of Agriculture granted a deed to the State of Minnesota to build an airport in Cook County. The deed only allowed the land to be used for airport purposes. That made sense at the time, but it now precludes the county from building a connector road on a sliver of the land. The connector project enjoys broad support throughout the community. H.R. 2947 does not seek any appropriation of Federal funds, nor does it authorize the project. It merely only proposes to remove a clause placed in the deed when the land was originally granted. This bill allows Cook County, Minnesota, to manage their own land as they see fit. The bill enjoys bipartisan support of Minnesota Senators and Minnesota State representatives.

I've reached out to the United States Forest Service, and they have responded by saying they have no objections and support this legislation moving forward. I look forward to quickly remedying this problem so that Cook County can create jobs and improve

the lives of its residents and businesses.

I ask for my colleagues to please join me in supporting this bill.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2947 releases a reversionary interest held by the United States to a parcel of land in Cook County, Minnesota. The release of this interest will allow Cook County to use this land for a local highway.

We have no objections to this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. This is another great solution to a problem that should have been solved at some other level. I appreciate the gentleman for bringing it back.

I urge its adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2947.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BOUNDARY MODIFICATION AND TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION, CIBOLA NATIONAL FOREST, NEW MEXICO

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 491) to modify the boundaries of Cibola National Forest in the State of New Mexico, to transfer certain Bureau of Land Management land for inclusion in the national forest, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 491

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

SECTION 1. BOUNDARY MODIFICATION AND TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION, CIBOLA NATIONAL FOREST, NEW MEXICO.

(a) BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.—

(1) MODIFICATION.—The boundaries of Cibola National Forest in the State of New Mexico, are modified to include the land depicted for such inclusion on the Forest Service map titled ''Crest of Montezuma Proposed Land Transfer'' and dated October 26, 2009.

(2) AVAILABILITY AND CORRECTION OF MAP.—The map referred to in paragraph (1) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Forest Service. The Chief of the Forest Service may make technical and clerical corrections to the map.

(b) TRANSFER OF BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT LAND.—

(1) TRANSFER.—The Secretary of the Interior shall transfer to the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Agriculture, for inclusion in, and administration as part of, Cibola National Forest, the public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management and identified as the ''Crest of Montezuma'' on the map referred to in subsection (a).

(2) EFFECT OF TRANSFER ON EXISTING PERMITS.—In the case of any permit or other land use authorization for public land transferred under paragraph (1) that is still in effect as of the transfer date, the Secretary of Agriculture shall administer the permit or other land use authorization according to the terms of the permit or other land use authorization. Upon expiration of such a permit or authorization, the Secretary of Agriculture may reauthorize the use covered by the permit or authorization under authorities available to the Secretary on such terms and conditions as the Secretary considers in the public interest.

(c) LAND ACQUISITION AUTHORITY.—Subject to the appropriation of funds to carry out this subsection and the consent of the owner of private land included within the boundaries of Cibola National Forest by subsection (a), the Secretary of Agriculture may acquire the private land.

(d) MANAGEMENT OF ACQUIRED LAND.—

(1) MANAGEMENT.—Any federally owned lands that have been or hereafter may be acquired for National Forest System purposes within the boundaries of Cibola National Forest, as modified by subsection (a), shall be managed as lands acquired under the Act of March 1, 1911 (commonly known as the Weeks Act; 16 U.S.C. 515 et seq.), and in accordance with the other laws and regulations pertaining to the National Forest System.

(2) WITHDRAWAL FROM MINING AND CERTAIN OTHER USES.—The land depicted on the map referred to in subsection (a) and acquired by the Secretary of Agriculture is hereby withdrawn from—

(A) all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(B) location, entry, and patent under the public land mining laws; and

(C) operation of the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws and the mineral materials laws.

(e) RELATION TO LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND ACT.—For purposes of section 7 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601–9), the boundaries of Cibola National Forest, as modified by subsection (a), shall be considered to be boundaries of the Cibola National Forest as of January 1, 1965.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This legislation would authorize the transfer of a parcel of land known as the Crest of Montezuma from the Bureau of Land Management to the Forest Service.

The Crest of Montezuma is remote from the current BLM-managed areas. It can be better managed by the Forest Service as part of the Cibola National Forest. Both agencies agree and support this legislation.

I urge the adoption of this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TSONGAS. I rise in support of this legislation, and applaud Congressman HEINRICH for his hard work. It is hard to reach consensus on these issues, and he has achieved that with this legislation.

With that, I yield such time as he may consume to Congressman HEINRICH of New Mexico, this bill's sponsor.

Mr. HEINRICH. I want to thank my friend from Massachusetts for the time today and for her leadership on these issues.

Mr. Speaker, the Cibola National Forest provides a stunning backdrop to the city of Albuquerque and much of central New Mexico. Stretching north to south through the Sandia and Manzano Mountains, this national forest demonstrates the value of preserving wild places near urban areas.

H.R. 491 would expand the boundaries of the forest to streamline management and improve recreational access for local residents. It would transfer a 917-acre parcel, known as the Crest of Montezuma, from the Bureau of Land Management to the Forest Service.

The Crest of Montezuma is an isolated BLM parcel adjacent to Cibola National Forest. The bill would also extend the forest boundary around three small parcels of private land adjacent to the Crest of Montezuma to allow the future purchase of these parcels subject to available funds.

The owners of these parcels are willing sellers and eager to see their land permanently protected for the public good.

H.R. 491 has strong local support from local residents, including from the Las Placitas Association, a 300-member citizen group that represents residents near the Crest of Montezuma. Local sportsmen also support the bill because of the importance of these lands as wildlife habitat.

Over the last 3 years, I've received many letters from constituents asking me to make sure that the Crest of Montezuma is managed in a way that preserves its role as a wildlife corridor and opens it up for recreation for local residents.

I am pleased to sponsor this bill to add these critical lands to the Cibola National Forest, and I ask my colleagues for their support.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I have no other speakers. Do you have anyone else on this issue?

Ms. TSONGAS. We do not. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I also yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 491.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK LAND EXCHANGE ACT OF 2012

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2240) to authorize the exchange of land or interest in land between Lowell National Historical Park and the city of Lowell in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2240

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 ''Lowell National Historical Park Land Exchange Act of 2012''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS.

The Act entitled ''An act to provide for the establishment of the Lowell National Historical Park in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and for other purposes'' approved June 5, 1978 (Public Law 95–290; 16 U.S.C. 410cc et seq.), is amended in section 202, by adding at the end the following:

''(d)(1) The Secretary may exchange any land or interest in land within the boundaries of the park for any land or interest in land owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the city of Lowell, or the University of Massachusetts Building Authority.

''(2) Except as provided in paragraph (3), an exchange under this subsection shall be subject to the laws, regulations, and policies applicable to exchanges of land administered by the National Park Service and any other terms and conditions that the Secretary determines to be necessary to protect the interests of the United States.

''(3) Where facilities or infrastructure required for the management and operation of the Lowell National Historical Park exists on the Federal land to be exchanged, and the non-Federal land or interest in land to be exchanged is not of equal value, the values shall be equalized by the payment of cash to the Secretary. The Secretary shall not be required to equalize the values of any exchange conducted under this subsection if the land or interest in land received by the Federal Government exceeds the value of the Federal land or interest in land exchanged.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 2240, introduced by the gentlelady from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS), will authorize a land exchange between the Lowell National Historical Park and the city of Lowell, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the University of Massachusetts Building Authority.

This will allow the transfer of the visitor center parking lot in exchange for an equal number of parking spaces in a new garage to be built by the city. The Park Service property, where the current lot is located, is needed for the community development, and the stakeholders have concluded that this is a more beneficial use to the community and the park visitors.

I urge the adoption of H.R. 2240, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TSONGAS. It is with great pleasure that I rise today in support of H.R. 2240, the Lowell National Historical Park Land Exchange Act.

This legislation will facilitate the exchange of land or interest in land between the city of Lowell and the Lowell National Historical Park.

In 1978, legislation was passed establishing this park. It was championed by my late husband as well as by two Republican Members of Congress who previously represented this district. We should take bipartisan pride in its great success.

This national park was given a unique mandate to not only preserve and interpret the resources representing Lowell's central role in our 19th century industrial revolution, but also to serve as a catalyst in revitalizing the city's physical, economic, and cultural environment, all outgrowths of the city's industrial heritage.

In working together with the city of Lowell, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and many other public and private partners, the Lowell National Historical Park has played a vital role in rehabilitating over 400 structures and has since 1978 helped spur an estimated $1 billion in private investment in the city. All of this has been done while the park has developed a compelling array of programs, exhibits, guided tours, and other interpretive programs.

□ 1700

H.R. 2240 would allow the park and its partners to continue working to advance the park's mission to preserve the city's historic industrial architecture while creating jobs and continuing to partner with the city of Lowell to advance a critical economic development project, the Hamilton Canal District.

This legislation would most immediately allow the park to exchange a current surface parking lot for an equivalent number of spaces in a new garage that will be built by the city of Lowell adjacent to the present parking lot, guaranteeing necessary parking spaces for park visitors while freeing the surface parking lot for the incorporation into the Hamilton Canal District redevelopment.

On the space of the current parking lot and adjacent vacant property, the city, in working with private partners, plans to construct over 400,000 square feet of commercial and R&D space, generating as many as 1,600 jobs. As such, it is a critical piece in the master redevelopment plan for the area. This land exchange is supported by the Lowell National Historical Park, the city of Lowell, and all local stakeholders, and has received all major State permits and local zoning allowances.

Because the enabling law for the Lowell National Historical Park only provides for the park to receive additional land, it is not allowed to exchange land. This legislation would allow this mutually agreed-upon exchange. I want to stress that this legislation will cost the taxpayers absolutely nothing.

I thank Chairman HASTINGS and Ranking Member MARKEY, as well as Chairman BISHOP and Ranking Member GRIJALVA and the committee staff for working with me to advance this bill to the floor. It is my hope that my colleagues today will appreciate the importance of passing this legislation to create jobs, continue revitalizing this historic mill city, and protect a key part of our industrial heritage and economic history.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. It's another great bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2240, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1845

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CHAFFETZ) at 6 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

SPECIAL RULES FOR INYO NATIONAL FOREST LAND EXCHANGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2157) to facilitate a land exchange involving certain National Forest System lands in the Inyo National Forest, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 376, nays 2, not voting 53, as follows:

[Roll No. 178]

YEAS—376

Adams
Aderholt
Alexander
Altmire
Amodei
Andrews
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baldwin
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Bass (CA)
Bass (NH)
Becerra
Benishek
Berg
Berkley
Berman
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bonner
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brooks
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
DeFazio
DeLauro
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Gardner
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith (VA)
Grijalva
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Heinrich
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hochul
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Jordan
Keating
Kelly
Kildee
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kissell
Kline
Kucinich
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maloney
Manzullo
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McCollum
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meehan
Meeks
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Murphy (CT)
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Olver
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quayle
Quigley
Rahall
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Richardson
Richmond
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (AR)
Ross (FL)
Rothman (NJ)
Royce
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Sires
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Speier
Stark
Stearns
Stivers
Stutzman
Sullivan
Sutton
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner (NY)
Turner (OH)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Walz (MN)
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Webster
Welch
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Woolsey
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—2

Amash
Mulvaney

NOT VOTING—53

Ackerman
Akin
Barton (TX)
Bono Mack
Brady (PA)
Bucshon
Butterfield
Campbell
Cardoza
Critz
Davis (CA)
DeGette
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Filner
Garamendi
Gerlach
Gohmert
Griffin (AR)
Gutierrez
Hensarling
Hirono
Holden
Israel
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Kaptur
Landry
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Marchant
Marino
McClintock
Miller (NC)
Moran
Murphy (PA)
Pascrell
Paul
Pence
Platts
Rangel
Reyes
Roybal-Allard
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Sessions
Simpson
Slaughter
Wasserman Schultz
Yarmuth
Young (FL)

□ 1913

Mr. AMASH changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote No. 178. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 178.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 178, I was away from the Capitol due to prior commitments to my constituents. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 178, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to state for the record that on April 24, 2012, I missed the one rollcall vote of the day.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 178, the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2157—To facilitate a land exchange involving certain National Forest System lands in the Inyo National Forest, and for other purposes.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 178 on H.R. 2157 I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow for morning-hour debate and 1 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 1 legislative day to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials on the subject of my 1-minute regarding Pastor Joel Osteen and Co-Pastor Victoria Osteen of the Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

ARKANSAS COUNTY BANK

(Mr. CRAWFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of Arkansas County Bank. The bank is a fourth-generation family-owned business. It serves Arkansas County and

the Grand Prairie as a national- and State-chartered institution.

Arkansas County Bank began with humble origins. At the end of their first year of business in 1912, the bank had just $64,000 in total deposits. By 1919, Arkansas County Bank had its first million dollars in deposits and has seen steady growth ever since.

By 1985, Arkansas County Bank had expanded into Sevier County after purchasing the Bank of Lockesburg. Today, they also have a branch that serves the Stuttgart community.

Giving back is important to Arkansas County Bank. Bank employees regularly volunteer over 1,000 hours annually to charities and service organizations throughout the Grand Prairie of Arkansas.

As Arkansas County Bank celebrates 100 years of business, they are building on the past by looking to the future. With a record of service, Arkansas County Bank is dedicated to beginning a second century of community investment.

Congratulations again to the leadership, employees, and the family of Arkansas County Bank on 100 years of business.

PEACE OFFICERS VS. THE ANARCHY OF THE LAWLESS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when lawless drug dealers, child molesters, wife beaters, robbers, bandits, and other street terrorists threaten our communities, peace officers are always the first ones to track them down.

Peace officers are the last strand of wire in the fence against good and evil.

These men and women put themselves in danger every day in order to protect us and our families. Some put on the uniform and badge and do not return home after their shifts.

There has been an alarming 75 percent increase in police officer deaths since 2008. The year 2011 was the first time more officers died at the hands of street thugs than in car crashes. In many instances, the killers were repeat offenders who shouldn't have been roaming the streets in the first place.

As we approach Peace Officers Memorial Day in May, we have to support those that protect the homefront. They are what separate us from the outlaws and the anarchy of the lawless.

And that's just the way it is.

PRESERVING HEALTH CARE CHOICES FOR AMERICANS

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, more and more American consumers are discovering a provision in the President's new health care law that prevents them from buying simple, over-the-counter medications using their health care savings accounts or their flexible spending accounts unless they first get a doctor's prescription.

Instead of walking into their local drugstores to use their HSAs or their FSAs, Americans are now forced to visit a doctor and pay a standard copay before finally receiving a prescription to buy medicines like Advil or Claritin. Does this sound burdensome? That's because it absolutely is.

Mr. Speaker, millions of Americans use HSAs and FSAs for their flexibility and portability, yet this new health care law is taking that away and is wreaking havoc on patients and also increasing burdens on physicians.

We need to repeal this onerous provision, and that's why I've introduced legislation that does exactly that, with bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, this week, the House Ways and Means Committee will hold a hearing on the use of HSAs and FSAs on over-the-counter medicine practices, and I hope we'll all agree that individuals, families, patients, and doctors make the best decisions for their health care needs, not the government. It's time to do away with this onerous prescription requirement.

□ 1920

HELP RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATES WHO CAN'T FIND JOBS

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the extension of the current student loan interest rates.

Every young American who works hard and studies hard deserves a shot at the American Dream. Unfortunately, the economy, led by President Barack Obama, is denying them the opportunities that they need. Actually, according to an Associated Press analysis, over 53 percent of young college graduates aged 25 or under, which is 1.5 million young Americans, are unemployed or they hold low-wage jobs that don't require them to use the degrees that they just obtained.

Our approach to help young people is about more than just the interest rate that they pay on their loans; it's about creating an economy that gives them a chance to apply the knowledge that they worked so hard to learn. That means not raising taxes or imposing new regulations on the very job creators that will offer opportunities to our young people. It means opening up energy reserves to lower prices at the pump because, guess what, Mr. Speaker, young people also are paying these high gas prices as well.

Let's stop the rise in student loan interest rates, but at the same time let's get this economy moving so that America's young people can achieve their dreams.

STAFFORD STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, we are here today, Tuesday, April 24, to talk about an issue which, again, middle class families all across America are watching very closely. As the chart next to me indicates, in 67 days, the interest rates on the Stafford student loan program, a loan program which serves over 7 million college students all across America, is slated to increase its interest rate from 3.4 percent to 6.8 percent.

This program, which over time today has served roughly about 35 to 40 million Americans, is a critical component for middle class families to provide affordable higher education, which today, in the 21st century, is almost as important as having a high school education.

The Stafford student loan program's interest rate was cut in 2007 as a result of the passage of the College Cost Reduction Act, a measure which cut the rate from 6.8 percent down to 3.4 percent. Unlike this Congress, it was a bipartisan effort—77 House Republicans voted for that measure; 35 Republican Senators voted for that measure. George W. Bush signed it into law, President Bush, to his credit, and it provided, again, great relief for students all across America for an issue which we now know from the Federal Reserve Bank threatens, really, the financial solvency of America's middle class.

College student loan debt today now exceeds credit card debt. It exceeds car loan debt. One of the few safe harbors that exists in the system for students is, in fact, the Stafford student loan program. It has great bipartisan genealogy and sources.

Stafford was actually a Senator, Robert Stafford, from Vermont, a Republican, who, again, believed in education and was somebody who understood that the cost of college and university education is not what it used to be and that we had to give, again, middle class families better tools to pay for it.

Anyone who has dealt with the private student loan market knows that the rates today are roughly about 9 to 10 percent. Interest accumulates from the day the loan is taken out. If you're a freshman at a 4-year university, you accumulate interest for the entire time that you are in college using those loans. There is no forbearance. There is no timeframe in terms of repayment. Again, it is nondischargeable in bankruptcy if a person gets into great financial difficulty.

The Stafford student loan program, in contrast, has affordable rates—3.4 percent. There is a forbearance period, after a student graduates, of 6 months before payments commence, and no interest accumulates during the time

that the student is actually in college. If there are financial problems that occur, again, there are systems for deferring payments. In fact, there is an income-based repayment formula so that no more than 10 percent of your income can be devoted to the repayment of Stafford student loans.

So this is really, again, a measure which affects a broad swath of America in terms of millions of students, millions of families. It is really about the only avenue that young people facing the formidable challenge—almost like buying a house when you go to college. Yet we stand here today, 67 days away from having these rates increase.

Now, for those who have been watching this issue, President Obama, right from that podium at the State of the Union address, challenged this Congress back in January to address this issue to avoid a doubling of interest rates. To date, the majority party in this House, the Republican majority, has not taken up a single bill. Even though we hear some nice words on the other side, there is no measure with which they have come forward.

The chairman of the Education Committee last week was quoted in The New York Times as saying that protecting this rate at 3.4 percent was bad policy. We have the words of the chairwoman of the House Education Subcommittee, from North Carolina, who stated on a radio program a couple of weeks ago:

> I have very little tolerance for people who tell me that they graduate with $200,000 of debt or even $80,000 of debt, because there's no reason for that.

I would challenge that Member to talk to a new dentist or a new dental student graduating, or a nurse anesthetist who was in my office the other day who was carrying over $80,000 in debt. The fact of the matter is, in terms of trying to get, again, skills for this, the modern American workforce, that is a reality that students and families confront day in and day out.

Yet the leadership of the majority of this Congress is basically turning its back on the bipartisan tradition of the Stafford student loan program with its really pioneering Member of the Senate, Robert Stafford, with the bipartisan support for the College Cost Reduction Act passed with strong bipartisan votes and signed into law by a Republican President, George Bush, and basically saying it's bad policy and we're not going to do it.

Since last week—and again we did one of these Special Order 1-hour sessions with a countdown clock—some things are starting to change.

Yesterday, the Republican frontrunner, effective nominee for President, Mitt Romney, during the middle of a press conference, finished up, turned around, was walking away and turned on his heel and said, Oh, by the way, I want to say that I support President Obama's proposal to block the increase in interest rates of 3.4 percent. This is the leader of the Republican Party, nationally.

There does seem to be some hope. Now, it may be connected to the fact that the President, yesterday, was at the University of North Carolina, talking to young people in this country who know exactly what he is talking about in terms of higher education costs and the need to protect affordable loan programs to pay for college. Later tonight, he is going to be at the University of Colorado, talking to students at Colorado about exactly the same issue. Tomorrow, he is going to be at Iowa State University.

There is clearly a bit of politics swirling around here, because if you look at Mr. Romney's comments on this issue over the last few months or so, he has, in fact, said exactly the opposite. Indeed, he has come out in support of the Ryan budget, the Republican budget resolution, which was passed in this Chamber a few weeks ago. In that budget resolution, that 6.8 rate increase is locked in under the Ryan budget plan. Not only does it lock in the higher cost of the Stafford student loan program, it cuts the Pell Grant program.

□ 1930

That's the other workhorse of economic affordability in this country, named after Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island. Again, it is a grant program that helps the most needy students pay for college. It's up to $6,000—hardly enough to fully pay for most colleges in the country, but nonetheless is essential for college students across this country.

The Ryan budget cuts the grant level for the Pell program down to $5,000—unbelievable—at a time when we're seeing college student loan debt skyrocket in this country and, sadly, at a time when America's graduation rate, which was number one in the 1980s, has now fallen to number 12. For the folks who are listening here today, that is a trend of mediocrity for this country. That is not a trend of growth. That is not a trend of innovation for the future. That is a trend which basically says we are basically going to surrender to the forces of mediocrity in this country. And that is not acceptable to this country, and it's certainly not acceptable to all of us as Americans, and it resonates all across America. Again, I come from the Northeast, up in Connecticut.

We're joined here today by a great Congresswoman from the State of Texas, SHEILA JACKSON LEE, and I'd like to yield to Congresswoman LEE to talk about her perspective from the great State of Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I want to thank the gentleman from Connecticut for his untiring and unceasing work and for the reach that he has made to this issue to really touch the hearts and minds of those who believe that education is opportunity and it is something for which we need to plant the seeds for those who are now following forward with their destinies. I'm delighted to be on the floor as well with another leader in education, the Honorable DANNY DAVIS.

I would just say to you that I took the oath. And the whole 4 days when I was in my district, everywhere I went I touched the hearts of young and old when I reported to them that while their children are struggling, working hard trying to get good grades in higher education, and when they in good faith took out loans of about 2.8 percent just a few years back—somewhere between that and 3.4—now within days this is going to double. And we are here fighting in Washington to ensure that the doors of opportunity are not closed.

So I think it is very important. You are absolutely right to take note that the potential, or soon-to-be Republican nominee, for President has recognized the foolishness, unfortunately, of stalling in this House; that we have not simply passed a bipartisan effort, your legislation that I am a cosponsor of, that simply indicates that we will not see the doubling of those interest rates.

I have universities—if I don't call them all—from the University of Houston to Texas Southern University, Rice University, Houston Community College, Lone Star College, Houston Baptist, and St. Thomas in and around the 18th Congressional District, the University of Texas, Texas A&M, and others around the State; and young people who are attempting to achieve the American Dream and individuals who are going back to school. Even though our GIs have the GI Bill, some are extending their degrees and have had to take out loans.

So I rise today to join you and my good friend from Chicago to indicate that I'm going to join the army, if you will, the band of members who truly believes that there is no divide amongst us, Republicans and Democrats, when it comes to educating our children. Many of us are parents. Many of us have seen our children go through college, some having finished, some still in college, and some with young children coming into college. And although we are blessed, many will have to take out loans for higher education, and doctors and lawyers whom we wish for higher education will have to secure those loans. I don't want to be in the midst of a ticking time bomb. I don't want to be the barrier. I want to be the firewall that protects them and allows them to gain an opportunity in this world.

So let me just thank you for allowing me to be on the floor this evening to indicate to my colleagues we speak quietly and softly tonight because we're asking you to join us, my Republican friends. Take the lead and join us so that in a few days—not 67 days—we can finish this up. Let's give them a graduation present. Let's tell every student coming out of high school and every college student that's in college that we are going to be your firewall and give you an opportunity for success in this great country that has always been the country that people

have either come to or people have been proud to be in because of the great opportunity to be what you are achieving or seeking to be.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Congresswoman JACKSON LEE.

Again, just to follow up on one quick point, which is that there is legislation that is now pending in the House, H.R. 3826. A few minutes ago, we got our 146th cosponsor. To this date, though, we are still waiting for any Members on the majority side to join us in this effort. Again, 77 of them voted in 2007 to support this measure to cut the interest rates. It's time. It's time for them to listen to what their presumptive nominee is saying. It's time to join the Members on this side of the aisle and prevent the damage that this would do to middle class families.

And no one knows that issue better than a member of the Education and Workforce Committee, who has, again, done great work in terms of education issues and higher education affordability. Congressman DAVIS, thank you for joining us here this evening.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Thank you very much, Representative COURTNEY. I want to not only thank you, but I want to commend you for the tremendous leadership that you've displayed on so many issues as I've watched you since you've become a Member of this House. I also want to thank you for taking on this issue—the issue of trying to ensure that young people especially in our country, a country that has been dubbed the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth—and it got to be that way because of its emphasis on education and providing opportunity for individuals to begin in life anywhere in this country and move as a result of education to the highest ranks, to the highest levels, to the ability to make valuable contributions not only to the development of their own lives, but to the lives of others.

I often think of things that people have said about education and something that I'm told that Abraham Lincoln once said: Education makes a man easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave.

College access and success are fundamental stepping stones towards economic security and global competitiveness. As policymakers, it is imperative that we support students in making college affordable so that our citizens can prosper. We face an immediate crisis in college costs. Without congressional action, interest rates will get out of the box.

I'm very fortunate to represent a congressional district that has what we call an education mecca in terms of the numbers of institutions that we have in what we call the South Loop area of Chicago, which is only a few blocks long and a few blocks wide. We have more than a hundred thousand students just in that area at colleges and universities like Loyola, DePaul, Spertus College, East-West University. As a matter of fact, I was at the board meeting of East-West last evening, where we were reviewing our accreditation standards and making sure that everything was in order so that the thousands of students who attend that university could get the very best.

But unless we make sure that students can acquire the money, I have organized a little scholarship fund in honor of my parents, because they believed so much in education—two of the smartest people I've ever known. My father finished fourth grade when he was 19 years old. We saw his report card. But he was a great reader and he read everything that he could get his hands on. My mother was a little more fortunate than that. She finished eighth grade and was considered to be one of the more educated people in our community. But they pushed for education. They knew that if their children were going to have opportunities that they did not have that they had to get as much education as they possibly could.

□ 1940

So, when interest rates bar and prevent people, I just know so many students and so many families who are wondering if they're going to be able to make it. Last year, I had one family who called to ask if we could help them find the money just to get to school. They had done all of the other things that their daughter needed to do, but they came up short with transportation resources, and they were trying to keep from borrowing any additional money. And then once they get out of school, if your debt is so high when you go to try and find a job that it staggers you and pushes you back and works against your will, then it becomes even more difficult. So we're trying to make education affordable, just trying to give people the chance, the opportunity.

Something I remember that the fellow named Wolfe said:

> To every man his chance, his golden opportunity to become whatever his manhood, talent, ambitions, and hard work combine to make him, that is the promise of America.

Of course, if he were saying that today, he wouldn't have just said ''every man.'' He would have said, every person, every woman, everybody, every citizen, everybody who wants to should have that opportunity.

So, again, I commend you for your leadership, I commend you for your tenacity, and I just like the way you work. I like what you do. I like the issues that you raise. And you mentioned the Pell grants. Senator Pell, from the same area of the country that you come from, his daughter was in my office not very long ago, saying that she and a group of her friends were going to get very active on the whole issue of trying to make sure that individuals who were incarcerated had an opportunity to pursue the Pell grant in honor of her father and remembering the great work that he did. So I remember you for the great work that you're doing. I thank you, and I'm pleased to join with you this evening.

Mr. COURTNEY. That is high praise from you, Congressman DAVIS. When I was a freshman, brand new to the Capitol, the Education and Labor Committee, which you've been serving on for a number of years, it was a great honor to really observe you and to see that the College Cost Reduction Act was one of the first things that came out of the chute in January of 2007. And, again, your words tonight show that this has been a lifelong priority and mission for you to make sure that that happens.

You mentioned Abraham Lincoln from your great State of Illinois. It is interesting to note that the College Land Grant system, the Morrill Act, was actually passed in 1862 in the middle of the Civil War, the most catastrophic threat to our country's existence ever. And yet we had a President from your great State who had the vision to understand that every State should have a land grant college, which is what that bill did, and created a national commitment to higher education. Again, it was committed to agricultural sciences and mechanical engineering.

What an amazing story about somebody who, gosh knows, could have been distracted with whatever was happening in that terrible conflict, and yet he still understood that we can never, ever, ever lose sight of the importance of investing in our people. That's what has made our country great, and you know that better than anyone.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. You are absolutely right, and I thank you again because I went to one of those land grant colleges—I, along with seven of my brothers and sisters—and I can tell you that, had they not existed, none of us ever probably would have gone to a college or university. So, thank you, again, as I take my leave.

Mr. COURTNEY. I look forward to working with you over the next few weeks on this issue.

Now we're joined by a gentleman from the great State of Michigan, Congressman HANSEN CLARKE, who is a relatively new Member but who has, again, jumped right in on this issue. Thank you for joining me here this evening.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. You're very welcome, Representative COURTNEY. I thank the gentleman from Connecticut for raising this important issue and for introducing this important bill, which I'm very honored to support.

We've got to keep interest rates low on student loans. 3.4 percent is reasonable. The Federal Government shouldn't be in the business of trying to make money or extract more money from student loan borrowers. The real problem with these interest rates, if we allow them to go up, is that if a borrower, for some reason, can't make a payment because they're sick, because they get laid off, maybe they get a divorce, that the interest rate would

then compound. The interest would apply on top of interest, and the loan principal will actually start growing as the student loan borrower's income drops. So it puts student loan borrowers in a position where it could take them decades, if ever, to pay off their loans if they're in financial hardship. And that's not right.

As the gentleman from Illinois said, these loans are to provide people with educational opportunities, to give them a chance to get a degree where otherwise they wouldn't have the money to be able to do so. But instead, Representative COURTNEY, of these loans providing borrowers with a chance of experiencing the American Dream, the debt burden is so high on many of our graduates right now that the student loan debt has actually turned into a national nightmare. As you mentioned, over $1 trillion of debt is owed by student loan borrowers. These aren't just the graduates. There are parents that also borrow money and take out student loans that help fund the education of their kids so their kids can have a better life.

I've introduced a bill, H.R. 4170, to complement your efforts. It's the Student Loan Forgiveness Act of 2012. In that bill, I adopt your position on keeping the interest rates on student loans, Federal student loans, at 3.4 percent. Then I also want to make student loan repayment fairer and simpler by allowing every student loan borrower to get a second chance. Yes, you may have fallen behind on your payments—you may even be in default—but I want you to have a second chance to pay off your loans and to continue your education.

So, under my bill, every student loan borrower who is currently in repayment right now or has already taken out a loan will be able to repay that loan based on their income, 10 percent of their discretionary income. They make those payments for 10 years, and they'll be eligible to have the balance of their student loans, if there is anything outstanding, to be forgiven. But if you pay 10 percent of your discretionary income for 10 years, more than likely, you'll pay off a substantial amount of your loans if not the entire loan balance.

But for those who have had to borrow a lot of money because you decided to get a graduate education or maybe you came from a family that didn't have much money so that your only chance to get an education was to borrow student loans, you won't be saddled with those loans for decades. You'll be able to pay them off over 10 years, which is the standard term for student loan repayment.

One thing I'd like to add, though, about the bill is this: that forgiving the balance of these student loans is not just to help the borrower. It's also to help our country. Cutting student loan debt, keeping the interest rates down, and forgiving student loans that pose an excessive burden on Americans, that's the most effective, one of the most effective, ways to stimulate our economy to create jobs.

Think about it. A student loan borrower, instead of having to pay hundreds of dollars a month, maybe even $1,000 a month, that after they've paid it according to their income, according to their means, for 10 years, to have the balance of that forgiven so now they have this money available to use as they choose it, to invest, to start their own business. And think about it: our graduates, those are the ones that were disciplined enough to go to school. They were ambitious enough to set their sights on a goal and achieve it. Those are precisely the folks that we want to encourage to go into business because it's through private business, free enterprise, that we really create jobs in a sustainable way in this country. Let's free up people's money so they can start their own businesses and realize the American Dream, not just for themselves, but for everyone else.

I'm from the city of Detroit. We've always been a tough place, but we've had great entrepreneurs who risked everything, like Henry Ford, to create and expand the automobile industry in this country, which created jobs for millions of Americans for generations. We have so many young people right now who are ready to work and ready to start their own businesses, but they're not going to take any risk like that because they're too much in debt. They won't even buy a house because they can't afford it. Many student loan borrowers even postpone probably the most precious thing that anyone could get involved in—our great institution of marriage—and they put that off.

□ 1950

So, the student loan debt, it's not only a burden on the borrowers, on the parents, it's costing our society jobs and economic growth; and we're costing the global market the opportunity to be benefited by the great products that our country could produce, the great services that we could provide, the great technology that we could develop and create and sell globally. We are depriving the world of that because many of our budding entrepreneurs can't take the risk of starting their own businesses because they're in the hock of student loan debt, which is outrageous.

So, I want to thank you again for your leadership, for your persistent leadership on keeping student loan interest rates down at a reasonable level. As you can see, everyone around the country, including Members of the other party, they understand the commonsense notion of that.

See, these loans, again—essentially I'm talking to the American people because they understand this. These loans that the government provides you, it's not just for your benefit, it's to make our country stronger. There's a reason why we had the GI Bill after World War II. The more educated, the more trained, the more that we're able to develop our skills to our fullest potential, we're able to do more for ourselves and our community and for our country. See, that's what America is all about.

The reason this is such a big deal for me is that my dad immigrated to this country during the midst of the Great Depression, the midst of the Great Depression, the roughest time economically for this country, because he saw America as a land of opportunity. My mother, who was African American, had to struggle for years under discrimination and segregation in Detroit in the thirties and the forties and fifties. She was a school crossing guard and a cleaning lady who saved up all of her money so I could get a chance to get an education. But after I dropped out of school and after my parents died, the only way I could return to college is I had to borrow student loans. I thank this country for having those loans available as an opportunity for me to get an education, to come here and to be able to effectively represent the people of this country.

But you know what the problem is now, Representative, is that students who want to get the same education that I did decades ago, they may not be able to afford to do it. Even if they could borrow the money, they can't afford the costs that they'll have to endure in trying to pay off that debt year after year, decade after decade. That's not right. The Federal Government shouldn't have that kind of power to press people, robbing them of their money—because it's our money that we're using to pay off these loans—and robbing us of our job and economic potential.

So thank you again for your leadership. I'm very honored to join you in your endeavor to make student loan financing fairer for our country, but also, too, to let you know my bill, H.R. 4170, the Student Loan Forgiveness Act, I offer to complement your efforts to provide equal opportunity for education for all of us here in this country.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Congressman CLARKE, and thank you for sharing your personal story.

What has been sort of extraordinary to me is that over the last few months, as we've been working on H.R. 3826, our office has received communications from all over the country from folks talking about the importance of the Stafford program in terms of really transforming their lives. I'll be at Chamber of Commerce meetings; I'll be at Rotary Club meetings; I will have people who are not on my side of the aisle politically but coming up to me afterwards and saying this is something that the Congress absolutely has to pay attention to, that it has to protect that lower rate, and thank God this person had the Stafford loan program available to him just like you did.

To see that rate go up to 6.8 percent at a time when our economy—Treasury bonds are being sold at a 2 percent yield. You can get a 30-year fixed mortgage for, really, under 4 percent right now, variabilities at much lower. When you tell people that this rate is going to double to 6.8 percent for this one segment of the population, young Americans who really are doing it for the purpose of improving their own situations, it's greeted by just absolute utter disbelief.

At a time when, as you point out, debt levels—and I've got a little chart here from the Federal Reserve which shows where we're headed right now in this country. We have got to, number one, not make the condition worse by increasing the interest rate—and again, we've run the numbers.

Over a 5-year period of time, somebody who has got a Stafford loan portfolio is looking at an additional $5,000 in interest payments. It's $11,000 for over a 10-year period, which is quite normal, as you said, for people paying back their student loans. We are compounding the trend lines for which the Federal Reserve Bank has, again, put up the warning flags to tell us that we're just creating crushing debt.

The Wall Street Journal had a story, which I was thinking of it as you were speaking earlier, about a young couple with student loan debts who basically were putting off starting a family and buying a house because of the debt levels, that they were basically just working to pay for every month in terms of their burdens there.

We need to be, frankly, A, dealing with the issue of the rate increase obviously in the next 67 days; but, secondly, we need to have a much bigger national conversation to talk about measures like your bill to create, again, a system that rewards people who are current with their payments, who are making progress in their lives but that are not going to have a ball and chain around their necks in terms of debt levels that, again, as you point out, at the end of the day really inhibit creativity and investment and innovation for people at a time in life when they really should be just spreading their wings, not dragging these huge burdens of debt that really hold them back and hold our country back.

So, again, I really appreciate your contributions here this evening. The clock is ticking, 67 days and counting.

Mr. Romney yesterday basically put up a strong signal to the congressional majority in the House here, the Republican congressional majority, that this is something that we must do. And we're still waiting. 146 cosponsors on H.R. 3826.

I'm not somebody who has a big ego. If somebody has a counterproposal to come up with a different way to do this, we're all ears. But what we don't need are the comments of the chairwoman of the Higher Education Subcommittee basically saying she has no tolerance for students with $80,000 in student loan debt. That is a Congress which is out of touch with the reality that young people are confronting these days, who are really trying to improve themselves and fill the workforce needs of this country.

We cannot afford that type of leadership here in this Congress. We need to have people who are focused on the real condition of the middle class in this country, but also really focused, like Abraham Lincoln was back in 1862, about what's important in terms of the future of this country.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Your request for us to keep interest rates at 3.4 percent is so reasonable that we need to act on that right now. The point that you mention, that we need to have these loans available for our students so they can get the training that they need to be hired into jobs that are going unfilled right now, in metropolitan Detroit, which is known for having a high unemployment rate, where people really want to go to work, there are thousands of jobs that are available in metro Detroit that are not being filled because employers can't find the folks that have the training in the information technology area for software engineering.

So, we want to encourage people to go to school even if they don't have the money. We want them to be able to borrow loans without having to go into this type of debt.

My final point is this, too: that if we allow borrowers to be burdened by student loan debt to such a degree that they can't pay off their debt, we, as taxpayers, are on the hook for this debt. Probably one-half trillion of it is taxpayer backed. So we're on the hook for this one way or the other. We should give our borrowers a helping hand so they can manage their student loan repayments, pay this debt down, and then get on with their lives and help us create jobs throughout this country and throughout this world by selling the best products that metro Detroit knows how to do.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. CLARKE.

In closing, I just want to end where we began, which is that it's 67 days and counting.

Today, all across America, there are high school seniors who are experiencing probably one of the most exciting moments in their lives, which is that they're going to the mailbox to find out whether or not they've been accepted to a 2-year school or a 4-year school. I remember those days. I have a son who just finished up college—and remember how exciting that was—and a daughter who's in high school and who's hopefully going to hear soon when her turn comes. But the fact of the matter is they need to have some horizon, some predictability at this critical moment to make sure that they can plan and budget to pay for college.

□ 2000

Financial Aid offices all across the country are putting up warning flags for students and their families that interest rates are going to double unless Congress acts. And the fact of the matter is that creates an instability about planning for what college to go to, what kind of budget a family can really accommodate in terms of paying for student loan debt. And that's wrong.

I mean, we can do better than that as a Congress. We can do better than that as a Nation.

Again, we're glad to see that Mr. Romney finally came around, even though he had sent out signals in opposition to this type of approach by supporting the Ryan budget which locks in the 6.8 percent interest rate.

But you know what, this issue is too important to get sucked into sort of partisanship here. It is time to move forward, just like we did in 2007, when 77 Republicans voted in favor of the College Cost Reduction Act; 35 Republican Senators supported it. President George Bush signed it into law, a program named after Republican Senator Robert Stafford from Vermont.

I mean, come on. You know, people are sick and tired of the fact that every single issue, whether it's a highway bill, a payroll tax cut extension, or education assistance for middle class families gets sucked into this partisan maelstrom in Washington, DC.

And the fact of the matter is there's 146 Members on our side that have cosponsored H.R. 3826 that are looking for a signal from the Republican majority to say, you know what, it's time to look at our history. It's time to look at the genealogy of the Stafford student loan program and the great bipartisan support to cut those rates 5 years ago.

Let's come up with a solution. Let's move. Let's help those families whose students are being accepted into college and those financial aid offices that are trying to help families budget and plan for the next academic school year.

Sixty-seven days is really not enough time, even today, but we should at least not compound it by delay and, hopefully, not compound it by letting just a totally unacceptable increase in interest rates for Stafford student loans to go into effect.

And I look forward to working with you, again, in the next hours and minutes and days to make sure that that doesn't happen. Thank you for joining me here, Congressman CLARKE.

I yield back the balance of my time.

WESTERN CAUCUS ON JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to be on the floor tonight speaking on behalf of the Western Caucus. We, in the West have been working for 2 years now—for a year and a half—to help the Obama administration out with their tasks.

In September of last year, September 11, President Obama said that he would keep trying every new idea that works and listen to every good proposal, no matter which party comes up with it. And so 4 days later, on the 12th of September, last year, we in the Western Caucus, Senator BARRASSO and myself, sent a letter to President Obama outlining the ''Jobs Frontier Report''; but, to date, we have not yet heard from the administration.

In that jobs report we have, basically, 40 different pieces of legislation that create American jobs, utilize American energy, and also stop regulations that are in the process of killing, during this year, 3 million more jobs.

So at a time when the Nation is faced with 8.2 percent unemployment, continuing over 8 percent, month after month, for one of the longest periods of time in our history, the administration seems pretty flat-footed on ideas, and so we in the Western Caucus felt like we could assist in that. That's our business. Many of us are familiar with the industries, we're familiar with the job creation that can go on in the Western States. And so we felt that we were offering help to the administration but, to this point, they've been completely unresponsive.

If you go on our Web site, you would be able to see the ''Jobs Frontier Report.'' We've got the cover of it depicted here, and it simply describes in that report the 40 exact pieces of legislation that have already been written and submitted in order to create these jobs.

Now, it would be important to understand that all of these jobs, not one of them requires Federal input, no Federal expenditure, no Federal stimulus, no tax to the American people. And, instead, we're simply trying to solve the problem with the free market that has caused this country to be so great in the past.

We are faced with unemployment in the West that is actually much higher. It's 10.1 in percent in the West, which tells us that the accusations that there is a war on the West, a war on jobs in the West by the administration are verifiable in the unemployment figures.

We have other documentation. Gas prices have doubled since 2009. The public lands are facing increasing restrictions.

The President has recently stated that the oil production is up in the U.S. Well, he stated a correct thing; but what he should have been, from his perspective, talking about is it is all produced on public lands. And when we analyze that, we find out, in 2011, that oil based on public lands, produced on public lands, actually decreased by 14 percent, and that the gas production, natural gas production, decreased by 11 percent.

And so when Secretary Salazar levies his charge that the facts don't speak for what our position is, maybe we could redirect the Secretary to go to the Web pages for the government that would describe exactly what we're showing here, that the oil production that is occurring to increase our total production is occurring on private lands. It is not occurring and is, in fact, decreasing on public lands.

That's because the government is slowing down the permitting process. They're finding new and restrictive ways to implement requirements on people who would be creating jobs, who would be drilling for oil; and each of these processes simply strings out our investment.

We had testimony earlier today, the House and Senate Western Caucus came together, had testimony from two different panels; and one of the panelists explained that they had bought—they had paid for these leases on public land, but they, in fact, then turned them back because the requirements turned it into a proposition that they had not bid on at all.

So we continue to find these case examples of too much interference, too much regulation, causing the energy sector to slow down in certain areas on public lands therefore creating more unemployment and creating a bigger gap.

I'll finish one thought, and then I'm going to yield time to my friend, Congresswoman LUMMIS from Wyoming, who is a member of the Western Caucus and is the vice chairman of that. We were in the hearing together earlier today.

But at this time in our Nation's history, almost everyone agrees that the greatest threat that we face is the continuing debt and the year-after-year deficits.

There are only three ways that you can solve deficit. If you're spending more money than you're bringing in, as a family, well, you've got a couple of choices. Number one, you can go out and get a second job or retraining to where you make more income so you can increase your income.

Number two, you can cut your expenses down; or, number three, you can borrow money to make up the differences.

The Federal Government is faced with the same conclusions. It either needs to increase revenue, that's by raising taxes; or you can increase revenue by growing the economy, that's creating more jobs.

Secondly, you can cut spending. Thirdly, you can borrow.

Unfortunately, the Federal Government goes one extra step that most families, some families actually resort to, but it's against the law for families. It's perfectly legal for the government. But the fourth thing is to print money. And it's that printing of money, that debt which is not being able to be repaid that is the great threat to the country.

If we were to look across the West and see where we've choked off jobs and put those people back to work in the hundreds of thousands of jobs, then each job would do two things. First, they would cut the cost of the government because those people come off unemployment, welfare, food stamps; but then, secondly, they go to work and start paying taxes. So you have a squeeze from both the cost end, because the government is spending less money; but you also have an increase in revenue so your costs and revenue move together when we create jobs.

□ 2010

That's the reason that the Western Caucus is concentrated on jobs rather than a taxation policy or a borrowing policy and especially not on the printing-of-money policy.

So at this moment, I will yield time to my good friend, CYNTHIA LUMMIS, from Wyoming. We welcome you tonight and thank you for being willing to speak on behalf of the Western Caucus.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your work as chairman of the Western Caucus.

The western States are roughly the 17 western States and three island governments, but they also include Members from States who have very similar problems, but who happen to be east of the Mississippi, such as some of the southern States along the Gulf of Mexico that have enormous energy reserves and face some of the same regulatory burdens. Also, people from coal-producing States that are east of the Mississippi, such as West Virginia, where a heavy attack on coal has jeopardized jobs and the future of coal in this country as a contributor to our energy future.

As we see from the chart next to me and from what Congressman PEARCE has previously told us, even though energy production is up, oil and gas production is up on private land. This is the bar to my far right. Over closer to me to the left, it shows that energy production, oil and gas production from Federal lands has declined—11 percent in the case of oil and 6 percent in the case of natural gas.

Now, why is this affecting gas prices? Why does President Obama say that drilling more now on Federal land will not affect oil prices now or the price of gas at the pump?

Well, there's two ways to look at that. One is he's correct that it's not going to affect the price of gasoline today or tomorrow. But the fact that we're not drilling now and that permits are not being issued now—we know of about 22 projects for the proposed 44,000 new oil and gas wells on private land that are being held up. That's going to be gas production and oil production that will be available in the future, anywhere from 3 to 7 years, that because of these regulatory burdens is not going to be produced.

That not only drives up the price of gasoline and power of all kinds, energy of all kinds, in those future years long after President Obama is out of office, but it does affect today's futures market because the people who are looking

at the price of gasoline are looking at whether production is continuing to go up in this country. That is a factor that is considered when futures pricing occurs, and because it's very obvious that the government policy in the United States for the last 4 years has been away from oil and gas and coal and in favor only of solar and wind energy because we subsidize it so heavily and promote it so heavily at the United States Department of Energy, it does affect the price of oil, gasoline, and eventually gasoline at the pump.

Now, another factor related to the coal issue that I mentioned is, are we going to hurt our environment if we don't quit using coal? The answer is to look at our regulatory work that was done prior to President Obama taking office, and it's represented on this chart.

Let's look from 1970. The population in the United States is up 48 percent since then; coal-fueled electricity up 184 percent since then. The gross domestic product of the United States up 200 percent since the 1970s in part because we have had affordable, reliable, and abundant electricity. So much of what we've done in this country in producing job growth is based on the fact that we have been able to rely on affordable, abundant electricity. Half of that has come from coal.

Now, in that same time period, emissions from power plants had declined 60 percent. Look at all of this growth. Look at even the growth in coal-fueled electricity and the decline in emissions down 60 percent. And that's due to the Clean Air Act and compliance with the Clean Air Act.

The point here being regulations can be valuable when done properly, and the Clean Air Act was a regulation that had the desired impact. It dropped emissions 60 percent by 2008. The problem has been since 2008, the efforts to overregulate have stifled our ability to create more energy from coal. It has reduced the number of jobs from coal. It has reduced revenue from coal, and it has reduced the affordability of electricity going into the future.

Mr. Chairman, I have some other points that I want to make about this. But for now, I'd like to just point out that the people who are bearing the brunt of our policies on energy in this country for the last 4 years have been people of very modest income. Because when gasoline prices go up at the pump, when your electric bill goes up, it is the people who are in the lower- and middle class population or in a category of workers who make very little money and struggle to make ends meet, especially single mothers, who are really bearing the brunt of these policies.

These policies are choices of this administration. They are conscious decisions that they are willing to see prices go up for coal, oil, gas generated power in order to make them more competitive with higher-cost, higher-priced wind and solar energy.

These are bad policies for the average, everyday American. These are bad policies for America's working mothers.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity.

Mr. PEARCE. I thank the gentlelady from Wyoming for her presentation and the facts that she presents.

One of the things that people constantly say who are opposed to oil and gas, to energy coming from America, is that it's impossible to drill and remain environmentally sensitive and safe. I think that those people are simply not looking at current technology.

It is possible with today's technology to drill up to 7 miles horizontally. That would be like drilling from here in this room here across the Potomac River somewhere out into Crystal City and putting a drill bit through a window that's maybe this large.

So what we're able to do is drill down 3,000 or 4,000 or maybe 5,000 feet, turn horizontally and drill and hit the zones of production. It is possible in today's technology to preserve almost the entire footprint of whether we're wanting grass lands or forest lands or whatever. We almost don't have to disturb those because the drill bit actually will be so far beneath the surface, we don't have to go in and clear locations like we did 15, 20, and 30 years ago.

You can also take one well, drill it straight down and then come off that and put multiple well bores so that what used to be spread on a quarter-acre or quarter-mile spacing or half-mile spacing might now today be one well for any number of the distributed wells.

So the environmental impacts of drilling today are probably less than in any other technology.

Wind energy, for instance. Wind is very large in New Mexico. They've got these miles and miles of wind generators standing in the air. Very large footprint. New Mexico is very capable of producing a lot of wind, but one of the problems is that the wind doesn't always blow and the sun doesn't shine all the time.

We had in Arizona recently—one of the operators of a wind farm said that they get about 12½ percent reliability, that is about 12½ percent of the time they're getting generated power out of the wind, and it's somewhat higher in Arizona for solar, about 25 percent of the time.

So when people are talking about converting from oil and gas to wind and solar, and I think every one of us believes that we ought to be using all of those forms of energy, but we have to understand that if we go to 12½ percent reliability, that's the amount of time that when you flip the switch that you're going to have power.

□ 2020

I think most of us are living lives that we demand and need power immediately for use of home appliances, for use of our computers. In manufacturing, you don't want power that is just available part-time. Generally, manufacturing is expensive and competitive. We're trying to keep our manufacturing jobs here, and the last thing we want to do is tell manufacturers you've got to shut down for 10 hours today because the wind is not blowing. The modern economies absolutely demand the predictability of good power when you flip the switch to turn on equipment or to turn on things in your home.

It is possible to provide those energy resources at the same time that we protect the environment. In my father's generation, there were lots of problems. In my generation, I watched as major companies began to clean up things that had originated back in the twenties and the thirties. So it's necessary for us to say that every single one of us wants to see the environment clean. They want clean water. They want the soil to be clean and clean air. And it is possible to achieve both because of the technologies that we have today.

I would draw our attention next to the fact that this administration has been saying that they want an all-of-the-above energy policy. At the same time, then, they're increasing restrictions on public lands and access to public lands. They're making it more difficult for the producers of both coal and electricity generation. They're making it so much more difficult that everyone in the West is struggling under the load.

The reason that the West has to deal with the problem more than the East is that the Western lands are so much more owned by the government. State government and Federal Government own such a large proportion of the land in the West that it's incomprehensible to States back East exactly about the problems that we face. But whether it's endangered species, whether it is restrictions, whether it is EPA, all of the agencies play a part in slowing down the process.

Recently, our administration—through Mr. Abbey at the BLM—said that we really want the BLM across the Nation to lower the time required to give permits. In fact, that time is still abysmally high at over 200 days.

I see my friend from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) standing ready to speak. At this time, if he is ready, we'll yield time to Mr. BISHOP, and we appreciate your presence on the Western Caucus.

Mr. BISHOP is the past chairman and still a respected person on the House Western Caucus. Thank you for being here tonight, and we appreciate your participation on the caucus.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I appreciate the gentleman from New Mexico's introduction, which is far more fluent than my presentation will be.

I share what the gentleman from New Mexico, as well as the gentlelady from Wyoming, have said on this particular issue, that we in the West seem to have a unique situation in which there is an

effort to try and stifle—hopefully by simple incompetence and not out of planning—but stifle the economic growth that we need so desperately in the West for our kids and for our future.

There are two things that were said today that I read in the paper that come from this administration, which tells us that we're obviously in a campaign season and that the words are simply being used in a unique and different way.

The President once said that the party to which I belong is currently engaged in a war on the poor, which I find unique because, to be honest, when you have overriding and ever-increasing energy costs, that—as the gentlelady from Wyoming said—is the real war on the poor.

Somebody who is in the bottom portion of our economic sphere, our economic stratus, will pay three times as high a percentage of their income for increased energy prices as those who are in the top will. If you have a nice urban job, you may have an inconvenience as energy prices go up. But if you're one of those struggling working families trying to make ends meet, this becomes a unique situation.

When gas prices go up to $4 or more, climbing towards $5, they may dip down again, but they will certainly rise one more time. It hurts the poor far worse than it does any other sector of our country. They are the ones who have the least likely chance of actually having some kind of fuel efficient automobile, and yet they probably have the greatest chance of needing desperately that car simply to go to work, and have no other options whatsoever. They are the ones who will have the most difficult time trying to heat their homes in the middle of winter with the increased cost of fuel. They are the ones who will recognize, first of all, that whenever the cost of gasoline goes up, the cost of food will also go up, simply because it takes money to send that food to market so that you can buy it. All of that hits those who are in the lowest sector of our economy harder than those who are in the upper sector of our economy.

One of the estimates we used a couple of years ago said that for every $420 a family has to pay in increased energy costs, it will equate to 6,000 jobs that will be lost in the economy. That's one of the problems that we simply find ourselves in. The sad part about that is we don't have to do it. This is not an energy-poor country. In fact, it is an energy-rich country.

We should be using the resources that we have here in the country to enrich ourselves and to help each other to have a better lifestyle, not getting worse. And the competition for energy is going to increase as time goes on. There are 6½ billion people in the world; 2 billion of those 6½ billion have no electricity today. They're going to want that in the future, which means our energy needs will be increasing, not diminishing. It doesn't matter what kind of efforts you put in there, our energy needs worldwide will be increasing. We have to be able to plan for that.

I have a good friend who is one of the CEOs of an energy company today who said when he was in college back in 1973, the word went out there that we were in an energy crisis, we were running out of oil, and we had to come up with a way of solving that problem. That was still the Shah's era, and so we did.

In 1977, we came up with a national energy plan. It was a colossal failure. It was an effort to do centralized planning here in Washington to come up with a way of solving our problem in the future, and it failed miserably. Thirty years later, we have people in the bureaucracies of this administration who want to try and reinvent a very bad wheel that didn't work back in the 1970s.

Someone has to tell this administration and this city that back in 1988, the Berlin Wall fell down and the idea of centralized planning was discredited throughout the entire world, not only in government, but also in industry. Everyone learned that lesson except the bureaucracies here in Washington, where a solution of this administration and far too much that takes place in this city is still the same idea: let's get a Big Government plan and let the government control everything. We want energy security, but we don't want to drill anywhere. We don't like $4 a gallon gasoline prices, but we're not ready to increase any refineries anywhere. We don't necessarily want more coal or hydro or nuclear, but we're not ready to come up with any kind of alternative. We actually do want to have more gas coming in here, but we're not ready to put any pipelines in place to try and make sure that actually happens.

The end result is we lose. The Western Energy Alliance made the prediction that because of our lack of energy development on public lands in the West, we have lost 16,000 jobs and almost $4 billion of infrastructure investment that comes in there.

The Secretary of Interior made a speech today where he called a lot of things we talk about here in Congress the ''imagined energy world.'' I think this administration believes in that imagined energy world.

It's very easy for this administration to list all of their alternative energy projects by name, because they have very few of them. They're not moving ahead with solar power. They're not moving ahead with wind power. They're not moving ahead with anything else, and they're not moving ahead with alternative forms either. And this hits us in the West specifically.

Mr. PEARCE, I don't want to consume too much time. You may want to go in another direction. But I'm an old school teacher, and this is one of the areas that is of concern to me.

This map is obviously the United States. Everything in red is what is controlled by the Federal Government.

□ 2030

You notice that we in the West have the unique opportunity of having one half of everything in the West controlled by the Federal Government. The Federal Government controls one out of every 3 acres in the Nation, and in some of our States it's like 90 percent, 70 percent, 60 percent of all the land is still controlled by the Nation.

Now, one of the things that you may say is, Well, is that bad? I want to contend to some of my good friends who live in other parts of the Nation that they have an interest in all of this red stuff over there because my good friends who live in the East are shelling out $8 billion to $9 billion a year in order to control the West, to pay for all this land. Every year, in their efforts to make sure this map stays the same, that's $8 billion to $9 billion that comes out of their pockets.

What do they get for that investment? They get this map. The States that are in red are the States that have the hardest time funding their education systems over the last several decades.

Now, notice once again the States in red. The area in red is the Federal Government's own land. The States in red are the ones that have a hard time funding. You notice there is kind of a correlation simply between the two? This is what the United States is getting for its $9 billion investment to control the West. We are harming our schools.

Now, even in this land that's in the West, we have a huge backlog in maintenance issues. Our National Park Service is hundreds of millions behind in their maintenance system.

There are some States like mine that simply said, you know, this is ridiculous. Our kids are being harmed in their education funding. We can't generate the money we need for our own infrastructure. Why don't you just let us take control of the land, and we will save those pristine areas that need to be saved. We will ensure there is access for recreation and multiple use, and we will develop those resources.

The Secretary of the Interior today said, simply, that concept defies common sense. The idea that only the Federal Government has the ability and the intelligence to control this kind of land and that people who live in the States obviously can't do it defies common sense.

What this means is the Federal Government that wants to spend more money for land acquisition, that cannot maintain its own land right now, that harms kids in the West with their education funding, that underfunds all the projects that are there right now and simply wants more and more, that's the common sense. If that, indeed, is the future, then we have a long, long way to go.

We in the West simply have a simple situation. We can do it just as well, if not better, and my argument to you is we can actually do it better. That's what should be common sense. Our kids are being harmed by this system. We are not producing jobs for our kids because of this system. What I think we need to do in the West is realize this is a country that has energy potential, energy ability, job potential, job ability, and we have kids that definitely need that.

We in the West pay more taxes than they do in the East when you add everything up. We put a higher percentage of our State budgets into education than they do in the East. We actually have higher class sizes than those in the East. We have more kids than those in the East.

We need to have the ability of actually meeting our particular needs. Part of that is for this administration to simply realize you've got to help develop the resources that we can. We can control it. We can fund it. We can do it if you give us the opportunity just to move forward.

This administration says that we are producing more oil now than ever before because it's all being produced on private property where they can't control it, try as they might to. If they simply unleash the potential in all this red area, this country would move forward in a growth spurt that is almost impossible to imagine. That's the commonsense plan.

I am very happy to be a part of this issue because I'm excited about what my colleagues are saying in a much more refined way than I have been able to do that, and I'm excited about hearing some more of my westerners who realize, hey, listen, there is a war on western jobs and it needs to stop. We need to have help in creating western jobs, not hindrance in stopping western jobs.

Mr. PEARCE. I thank the gentleman for his comments and would, again, accentuate both his points and the gentlelady from Wyoming's about the administration's current war on the poor. We have heard repeated comments from the administration and their representatives that we need to get the price of gasoline up so that people will consume less, that, yes, the price of electricity by our policies will necessarily increase dramatically. The price of electricity increasing, the price of gas increasing, punish the poor terribly. Why would we have policies that are so unfair to the poor? It defies imagination.

Also, following up on my friend's comments about the Secretary saying that it is impossible, just not feasible, even unimaginable that people in the States would take better care of the property than the Federal Government has, I would simply direct the Secretary's attention to those massive forest fires in the West. They are managing our forests in order that they would burn down. They and the Federal Government have choked the bureaucracy full of people in order to manage these resources, but, instead, they manage them in a process that ultimately sees that they will burn down. It's not a question of if but when.

The final comment I'm going to make, and then I'm going to yield to my friend from Colorado, but the President recently asked for $52 million to crack down on speculators, which he claims are the cause of high gas prices. $52 million to crack down on speculators.

Now, speculators, you have to understand that they make their money by guessing which way the market is going to go. Right now they see a government that is choking down access to supplies, so they scratch their head and say, We think maybe the price is going to go up and so they speculate and buy on the assumption that the price of gas is going up, the price of oil is going up, and lo and behold, they're making money.

But if the President were to announce today that he was going to open—and people sincerely believed him, that he was going to open access to Federal lands, those same speculators who today think the price is going to go up would begin to say, Oh, I better buy down, because if I bid up and the price falls, I'm going to lose money. So those speculators would begin to drive the price down.

But he doesn't need $52 million. All he needs to do is give one sentence from the White House that the war on the West is ending and we're going to open the West oil production up again. That would do the trick; no $52 million putting us deeper into debt. It simply makes sense to us from the West because we see it day in and day out.

We're joined tonight by our good friend, DOUG LAMBORN, from Colorado, and welcome here. It's nice to see you, and we appreciate your participation in the Western Caucus. We appreciate you being here tonight.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you, Representative. You do such a great job representing New Mexico, and you know so much about energy issues and financial institutions, issues like that as well. But this is a great forum. I thank you for organizing this and your leadership on energy issues.

I want to quickly address an issue that is of great concern to many people, myself included, and that is: Who should be regulating things like hydrologic fracking, fracturing—or fracking, for short—here in the United States? We have about 10 different Federal agencies that have their hand involved one way or another in regulating fracking, or at least trying to do so, from the EPA all the way to the Securities and Exchange Commission, if you can believe that.

I'm concerned because in my work on the Natural Resources Committee, along with ROB BISHOP that you heard from earlier, we have been hearing that the Bureau of Land Management, one of the agencies that our agency oversees, is proposing rules regulating fracking on public lands. The concern about that is that right now, in a State like Colorado, my own State, those State regulators are already doing a great job regulating fracking. They know the local geology. They know the water, the water aquifers. They know the things that someone in Washington is not really going to know.

If you add a second layer of bureaucracy onto what the States are already doing, you have the potential—in fact, the certainty—of crippling job production, crippling energy production, because you'll have twice as many regulations to have to deal with if you're an energy producer. Why in the world do we need to, when the States are already doing a good job, add another layer of red tape and bureaucracy? I'm really concerned about that.

The subcommittee that I'm the chairman of on Natural Resources, Energy and Mineral Resources, is having a hearing in Denver next week on Wednesday, the 2nd of May, at the State Capitol in Denver. We're going to get right into this very issue.

□ 2040

Should the States be regulating fracking, or do we also want to have the Federal Government regulating as well? I hope that the evidence shows—and I believe it will—that the States are already doing a great job. We can only lose by having another layer of regulation.

This is an issue that affects energy in the West on public lands, and I'm really concerned that we have Federal agencies getting involved when the States are already doing a fine job and it's only going to hurt the production of energy and the creation of jobs.

Mr. PEARCE. That is absolutely true. One point that is often omitted by the opponents of fracking is that the people who most want fracking not to communicate with the fresh water are the oil companies themselves. They drill this million-dollar well bore, then they run casing in the well bore. They put cement outside that casing in order that they can have a nice tight well bore in order to produce the oil that allows them to pump the oil out expeditiously. And when they frack, they frack thousands of feet below the water zones. They're usually right up at the surface. And for contamination to occur, that pressure that is pumped down in the thousands of feet lower in the well would have to come outside the well bore, outside the cement around the casing, all the way to the surface, and then contaminate the water up there. In doing that, they have ruined the entire well bore.

So the companies themselves are watching to see if there's any drop in pressure. That's when you know that you've got something bleeding off. They shut everything down. They patiently look at it. The oil companies, again, are the best custodians of the

water because they don't want to ruin the well that they have spent drilling and a lot of money in completing.

I notice that my good friend, Mrs. LUMMIS, is back at the podium, and would yield more time to her at this point.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to point out what States are experiencing in relation to our Federal budget. So let's start with the Federal budget. Here we have all our revenue for 2011 in this column. Here we have just our entitlement programs that we spend money on in this column. So we're spending all of the tax revenue we take in in this country just on our entitlement programs. That is Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, other mandatory programs such as food stamps and school lunches. And then, of course, interest on the debt. Which means every other discretionary program and the global war on terror and our national defense is all borrowed money—borrowed from China, from Saudi Arabia, from Japan, and from American companies and the American people. That would never happen in the State.

On the front page of my State's statewide newspaper today was an article that our Governor, Wyoming Governor Matt Mead, is asking all State agencies to budget for an 8 percent cut in spending, and the health department, a 4 percent cut in spending. This is because natural gas prices in the United States have dropped below $2 in MCF, which is extremely low, and my State is the second largest producer of natural gas in the Nation, and we're heavily reliant on natural gas for revenues.

So what do we do when our revenues decline? We cut spending. We budget differently. We don't hire people to sit in vacant positions. We leave those positions vacant or, better yet, make them completely go away. That's what States do to manage their problems. But an interesting source of revenue for the State is income off State lands. And it's a very important source of revenue.

Now, Mr. BISHOP from Utah pointed out earlier this evening that the American taxpayers are paying $8 billion, Mr. BISHOP, to pay for administering public lands in the West. In my State of Wyoming, we could be managing those lands. And if you went and looked at the quality of our State lands, you would be thoroughly impressed. They are beautifully managed. The stewardship is well done. We are producing oil and gas. We're producing livestock, cattle, and sheep. We're producing timber. We're producing recreational opportunities, open space. We're creating, because of all that open space, places where clean air, clean water, and clean living can really work together. It is a wonderful system with much smaller administrative costs than the American people are paying for the Federal lands in the West. We've proven that as States who received land when we became States, we can manage all of the land in our State that's not private land.

Consequently, I agree with what Mr. BISHOP said earlier. The fact that we have NEPA, FLPMA, SMCRA, CERCLA, and lots of other laws that are managed from the Federal Government's level that could be managed at the State level would make it much less expensive, would make the land stewardship closer to home where the people who really love and thrive on these important lands live and work and want to recreate and want to participate in the management of these lands.

They would also produce more revenue for the States, making States like Utah, like my own State of Wyoming, where we prioritize public education above all other expenditures of government, we would make more money available. Because as you know, in most States, the property taxes go largely to the education system. Well, when the land belongs to the Federal Government, the Federal Government doesn't pay taxes. Consequently, that money is not available to us.

Now, States do get something called PILT payments—payment in lieu of taxes—but they're not the same as if that land were on the tax rolls of the States in which those lands reside. Consequently, look at what we've summed up. We're producing less jobs off Federal lands with more regulations, more cost to the American taxpayer, less revenue to the States, less revenue to the Federal Government, and less potential for job creation. The job seekers end up being on unemployment instead of paying taxes because of the salaries that are paid. And when you have great-paying jobs like in the oil and gas industry, where the average job pays $72,000 a year—a much higher wage than the average wage in our States—we really are hurting ourselves terribly by not prioritizing jobs, not using Federal lands to their fullest capabilities in a way that provides great stewardship that those in the West value and seek and yearn for and want and would never compromise in order to have a robust State and a robust economy.

I want to thank Mr. PEARCE once again for his leadership.

Mr. PEARCE. I thank the gentlelady.

Before I yield time to my good friend Mr. BISHOP again, I'm reading in today's quotes that Interior Secretary Salazar said that House Republicans live in an imagined energy world. I appreciate his concern and his criticism. I consider it as constructive. But think about this imagination.

The President in March of 2012 said: We can't just drill our way to lower gas prices. We can't drill our way to lower gas prices. That's a viewpoint that could be considered legitimate, except that about the same time he's calling for Brazil and Saudi Arabia to increase their drilling in order to get the prices down so that people in America don't have to pay as much at the pump.

□ 2050

Now, I'm not sure what imagined energy world says that it will cause the price of gas to go down if they drill in Saudi Arabia and Brazil, but it won't cause the price of gas to go down if they drill over here. That, to me, argues that it is that that is instead an imagined energy world.

The Secretary goes on to talk about that these members of the Republican Party are members of the Flat Earth Society in a demeaning term. Now, in my county, you can see from one end to the other, miles and miles; and if you turn and look east, you can see all the way to Dallas 300 or 400 miles away. I do live in a flat part of New Mexico and can see across the line into Texas. And so he speaks in demeaning terms about flat Earth, and yet he's very happy to have all the production of oil and gas that comes from there.

So the flat-broke administration is criticizing the Flat Earth Society. And of the two, I would rather live on flat ground than be flat broke. And so I would yield to my good friend, and then I will close out.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I thank the gentleman from New Mexico, and, once again, I do agree with you. I enjoy your image of the world much better than this particular administration. It reminds me of ''Back to the Future'' when they had the two movies, what happened if Biff got the sports sheets and what happened if he didn't? It's almost what we're doing here. There are two actual visions of what the future of this America will be; and, I'm sorry, this administration keeps taking us down the road in which Biff actually does have the sports sheets and he is able to win all those bets and get control of everything.

I just want to add one other thing to what the gentlelady from Wyoming also said here. When we talk about the Federal Government and what the Federal Government does on public lands, I just want you to realize it is not only related to public lands itself.

We find that this administration is not satisfied with just living within the boundaries of public lands, but is coming up with policies that impact private property that is next to those public lands. When this administration took over, in the State of Utah there were 77 oil leases that had gone through a 7-year review. They had all the public hearings, they did everything, they were ready to be let for sale to try and develop those resources in the eastern part of my State.

The very first thing this administration did was recall those 77 leases. It didn't matter that the process had gone through, they had done the work. They recalled them for the purpose of special interest groups for their satisfaction. What happened in the eastern part of my State is the unemployment rate simply skyrocketed not only for

these 77 leases that were on public land; but the private sector that was there ready to invest saw the handwriting on the wall, and they pulled out of that particular area. They were not ready to go through the kind of harassment as well as the regulation that they could see taking place. And the unemployment skyrocketed; the investment in that area went. Only now is it starting gradually and gradually to come back in.

Here is the problem that we have with this administration's policies: Not only do they inhibit energy production and jobs that can be generated on public lands; their efforts of increased regulation and efforts to inhibit that kind of development take away jobs on private property where they see that there is not a future there and they don't want to go through the regulatory hassle. So what could have been developed in my State basically went to North Dakota on private lands, and there they found their ability to make lots of money and to increase the energy production here because they simply did not have to deal with this administration.

Unfortunately, it's not just about energy jobs. This administration on public lands is doing the same thing for recreation jobs. With the number of roads that have been closed on the forest and BLM lands, stopping the ability of people to hunt and fish and do other forms of regulation, even the kinds of regulation on outfitters that tells them what kind of coffee they have to serve when they're on Park Service property, that is an impediment to the development of our recreation community and recreation jobs at the same time.

One of the things we have to realize is that this administration's effort to try and control everything is producing nothing that is helping us create jobs for our kids to keep them at home. I appreciate Mr. PEARCE for actually starting this process and talking about this issue because it needs desperately to be addressed.

Mr. PEARCE. I thank the gentleman.

Senator HATCH is going to introduce this week the West Act, which is a combined 10 bills that we have previously sent from the House of Representatives that are sitting dormant drawing dust in the Senate, and so he is going to lump them together and push them out. Those are a part of our ''Jobs Frontier Report.'' And those acts do things like H.R. 1229, Putting the Gulf Back to Work Act, that's by Representative HASTINGS; H.R. 1230, Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act by, again, Mr. HASTINGS; H.R. 1231, Reversing President Obama's Offshore Moratorium Act; H.R. 2021, the Jobs and Energy Permitting Act, and that's by Mr. GARDNER from Colorado; H.R. 1837, the San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act by Mr. NUNES of California; H.R. 872, Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act by Mr. GIBBS; H.R. 1633, the Farm Dust Prevention Act by Ms. NOEM; and, finally, H.R. 910, the Energy Tax Prevention Act by Mr. UPTON.

Now, just talking among friends, I would feel that the Secretary of the Interior exposes a little bit of thin skin. These are credible debates that we're having in America right now, whether we should use foreign oil or oil produced in this country, whether we should export our jobs overseas to produce energy or whether we should get them here.

I read where Mr. Salazar says that the fact is most of the Outer Continental Shelf resources are open for business, he says. Well, then, give us the nod, and we'll simply pass those first three bills: Putting the Gulf Back to Work Act; Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now; and Reversing President Obama's Offshore Moratorium. If it's already the case, then just humor us, nod your head, and nothing will be changed since it's already open for business, and if the President would tell the Senate to go ahead and pass just those three bills, we could send them up to the President, and we could have plenty of jobs starting out and plenty of American production.

Again, I would look back at the price of natural gas. When the administration says that you can't drill and come up with lower prices, the price of natural gas a couple of years ago was in the $12 range. Today, the price is about $2.50. Now what caused the price to go from 12 to 2? When the price is going up, the President says, I need $52 million to control the speculators that are driving the price up. But when the price goes down, somehow he's not saying we need to give you $52 million back because now those speculators are driving the price down.

This view of energy in the White House, originating with the Secretary of the Interior, somehow doesn't get the fact that the reason the price of natural gas has fallen from 12 to 2—and that's a very steep decline—is because we have drilled our way into lower prices. We've increased the supply enough through more jobs and more production that world demand is kind of swamped with the supply. It's, again, an economic equation of supply and demand.

I think that's the greater impact in the price of gasoline today. The supply and demand of oil and the supply and demand of natural gas controls that. We have drilled our way to success in natural gas because companies went everywhere drilling on private lands.

But now, then, the administration is saying we need to curtail all that production here because it's not going to lower the price; we need to the control the speculators. These are simply inconsistencies that are punishing the American public. They're punishing the American public and especially the poor in the American public by higher gasoline prices and by higher electricity costs. It's making it to where families just can't get by, to where they can't make the payments for the month. And poor families everywhere are having to make choices to buy energy or to live in cold, live without air conditioning, and to not be able to drive and see their grandkids.

What kind of choices are those? Those are not the choices that I think most Americans want. I think most Americans like our lifestyle. Our lifestyle is based on two dominant things—the cost of food and the cost of energy. And when we drive both of those costs up through overregulation and through government limitations, then we're doing a disservice to the American public.

Every single person in America wants to see our land protected, they want to see the workers protected, they want to see soil, water, and air protected; but they also are desperate to see jobs created. It's within the power of this body, it's within the power of the Senate, and it's within the power of the President to create those jobs, to create the answers for an America that is tired, for an America that is scared, and for an America that is worried about its future and the future for her children.

□ 2100

It's within our power in this town to reverse those things, to stop the war on the West, to start making sense in public policy, to start making decisions that create solutions—real solutions for not just jobs, but for careers where people can plan their lives, they can set aside to buy a house, or to send their kids to school. That's the America that all Americans want across party lines, across racial lines. People for generations have come to this country for that promise, for that hope, and that opportunity. It starts with us in this town. It is time for us to put aside the differences.

We ask the Senate to pass the West Act; and, Mr. President, we respectfully ask for you to sign that act to bring jobs to the West and bring prosperity to the Nation.

God bless this country, and God bless each one of the taxpayers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCKINLEY). All Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. SCHIFF (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of illness.

Mr. MARINO (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today and the balance of the week on account of medical reasons.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 25, 2012, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5733. A letter from the Secretary, Air Force, Department of Defense, transmitting notification that the Average Procurement Unit Cost (APUC) and Program Acquisition Unit Cost metrics for the C-130 AMP Program have exceeded the critical cost growth threshold, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2433(e)(1); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5734. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Paul S. Stanley, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5735. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Richard Y. Newton III, United States Air Force, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of lieutenant general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5736. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Marc E. Rogers, United States Air Force, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of lieutenant general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5737. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Brigadier Generals Darryl W. Burke and John F. Newell III, United States Air Force, to wear the insignia of the grade of major general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5738. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Inflation Adjustment of Threshold for Acquisition of Right-Hand Drive Passenger Sedans (DFARS Case 2012-D016) (RIN: 0750-AH65) received April 3, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5739. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Repeal of Case-by-Case Reporting (DFARS Case 2012-D020) (RIN: 0750-AH67) received April 3, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5740. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Separation of Combined Provisions and Clauses (DFARS Case 2011-D048) (RIN: 0750-AH38) received April 3, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5741. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to various foreign buyers pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

5742. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Russia pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

5743. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting the Council's Annual Report for 2011; to the Committee on Financial Services.

5744. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's semi-annual Implementation Report on Energy Conservation Standards Activities, pursuant to Section 141 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5745. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medical Devices; Neurological Devices; Classification of the Near Infrared Brain Hematoma Detector [Docket No.: FDA-2012-M-0206] received April 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5746. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding Between the Food and Drug Administration and Other Departments, Agencies, and Organizations [Docket No.: FDA-2012-N-0205] received April 2, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5747. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2013, pursuant to Public Law 106-398, section 1308 (114 Stat. 1654A-341); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5748. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the text of ILO Recommendation No. 200 concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work, Adopted by the Conference at its Ninety-Ninth Session, Geneva, 17 June 2010, pursuant to Art. 19 of the Constitution of the International Labor Organization; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5749. A letter from the Director, Bureau of Economic Affairs, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — International Services Surveys: BE-150, Quarterly Survey of Cross-Border Credit, Debit, and Charge Card Transactions [110817508-2069-2] (RIN: 0691-AA79) received March 26, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5750. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's final rule — Schedule of Fees for Consular Services, Department of State and Overseas Embassies and Consulates [Public Notice 7835] (RIN: 1400-AD06) received April 11, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5751. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 12-001, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5752. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's report entitled, ''Report on Denial of Visas to Confiscators of American Property'', pursuant to 8 U.S.C. 1182d Public Law 105-277, section 2225(c); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5753. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 11-105, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5754. A letter from the Diversity and Inclusion Programs Director, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the eigth annual report pursuant to Section 203(a) of the No Fear Act, Pub. L. 107-174, for fiscal year 2011; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5755. A letter from the Commissioner, International Boundary and Water Commission United States and Mexico, transmitting the Commission's annual report for FY 2011 prepared in accordance with Section 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Public Law 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5756. A letter from the HR Specialist, Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation, transmitting the Office's annual report for Fiscal Year 2011 prepared in accordance with Section 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Public Law 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5757. A letter from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator For Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Adjustment to 2012 Annual Catch Limits [Docket No.: 111207734-2119-02] (RIN: 0648-BB50) received March 26, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5758. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Sub-Annual Catch Limit (ACL) Harvested for Management Area 1B [Docket No.: 0907301205-0289-02] (RIN: 0648-XA971) received March 26, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5759. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Sub-ACL (Annual Catch Limit) Harvested for Management Area 2 [Docket No.: 0907301205-0289-02] (RIN: 0648-XB001) received March 26, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5760. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod for American Fisheries Act Catcher/Processors Using Trawl Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 101126521-0640-02] (RIN: 0648-XB028) received March 26, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5761. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's report detailing activities under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act during Fiscal Year 2011, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1997f; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

5762. A letter from the Senior Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-1230; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-141-AD; Amendment 39-16964; AD 2012-04-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5763. A letter from the Senior Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2008-0107; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-087-AD; Amendment 39-16965; AD 2012-04-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5764. A letter from the Senior Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Pratt & Whitney Division Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0944; Directorate Identifier 2011-NE-11-AD; Amendment 39-16960; AD 2012-04-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5765. A letter from the Senior Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airplanes Originally Manufactured by Lockheed for the Military as P2V Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0107; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-018-AD; Amendment 39-16955; AD 2012-03-51] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 30, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. CANSECO, Mr. OLSON, Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. LANDRY, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. TERRY, and Mr. BERG):

H.R. 4480. A bill to provide for the development of a plan to increase oil and gas exploration, development, and production under oil and gas leases of Federal lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Secretary of Defense in response to a drawdown of petroleum reserves from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4481. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure that Department of Veterans Affairs employees who violate certain civil laws do not receive bonuses; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4482. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make permanent home loan guaranty programs for veterans regarding adjustable rate mortgages and hybrid adjustable rate mortgages; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. REYES, Mr. RUSH, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Ms. FUDGE):

H.R. 4483. A bill to authorize the Director of the National Science Foundation to provide grants to institutions of higher education for implementing or expanding reforms in undergraduate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education in order to increase the number of students from underrepresented minority groups receiving degrees in these fields, and to recruit, retain, and advance STEM faculty members from underrepresented minority groups at institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. MCKEON):

H.R. 4484. A bill to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Utah to Brigham Young University, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 4485. A bill to further the preparedness of the United States Armed Forces, in cooperation with regional allies, to prevent the Government of Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MANZULLO:

H.R. 4486. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on polypropylene fiber with tow bundles comprised of 300,000 to 400,000 individual filaments; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MANZULLO:

H.R. 4487. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on polyester fiber with tow bundles comprised of 300,000 to 400,000 individual filaments; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4488. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 2-ethylhexyl (4-chloro-2-methylphenoxy) acetate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4489. A bill to suspend temporarily the rate of duty on 2-Methyl-2-(methylthio)propanal O-(N-methylcarbamoyl)oxime; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4490. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 2-Methyl-4-chlorophenoxy-acetic acid, dimethylamine salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4491. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 4-(2,4-dichlorophenoxy) butyric acid and 4-(2,4-dichlorophenoxy) butyric acid, dimethylamine salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4492. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on MCPB Acid and MCPB Sodium Salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4493. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Bromoxynil Octanoate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4494. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on triphenyltin hydroxide; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4495. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on dichlorprop-p acid, dichlorprop-p dimethylamine salt, and dichlorprop-p 2-ethylhexyl ester; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4496. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 2-methyl-4-chlorophenoxyacetic acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4497. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on formulations containing Bromacil and Diuron and application adjuvants; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4498. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on formulations containing Diuron and application adjuvants; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4499. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Dimethyl carbonate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4500. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 5-Chloro-1-indanone; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4501. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Esfenvalerate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 4502. A bill to extend and modify the temporary suspension of duty on certain men's footwear; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 4503. A bill to extend and modify the temporary suspension of duty on certain men's footwear; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 4504. A bill to extend and modify the temporary suspension of duty on certain women's footwear; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 4505. A bill to extend and modify the temporary suspension of duty on certain women's footwear; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4506. A bill to extend and modify the temporary reduction of duty on Metalaxyl-M and LMetalaxylfenoxam; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4507. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Cloquintocet-mexyl; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4508. A bill to extend and modify the temporary suspension of duty on Difenoconazole; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4509. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Benzene, 2,4-dichloro-1,3-dinitro-5-(trifluoromethyl); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4510. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Cyprodinil; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4511. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Trinexapac-ethyl; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4512. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain mixtures of cyhalothrin; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4513. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain formulations of Thiamethoxam, Difenoconazole, Fludioxinil and Mefenoxam; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4514. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain mixtures of Difenoconazole and Mefenoxam; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4515. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Mucochloric acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4516. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Methidathion; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4517. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 4-Chloro-3,5-dinitro-,,-trifluorotoluene; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4518. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain mixtures of Azoxystrobin; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4519. A bill to extend and modify the temporary reduction of duty on Azoxystrobin; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4520. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 2-Chloro-6-Fluorobenzyl Chloride; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4521. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on thermoplastic biodegradable polymer blend; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4522. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on thermoplastic biodegradable polymer blend; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4523. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on yarn of combed cashmere or yarn of camel hair; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4524. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on yarn of carded cashmere 19.35 metric yarn count or higher; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4525. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on camel hair, processed beyond the degreased or carbonized condition; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4526. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on waste of camel hair; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4527. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on camel hair, carded or combed; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4528. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on woven fabrics containing 85 percent or more by weight of vicuna hair; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4529. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on camel hair, not processed in any manner beyond the degreased or carbonized condition; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4530. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on noils of camel hair; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4531. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on fine animal hair of Kashmir (cashmere) goats, processed beyond the degreased or carbonized condition; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4532. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on yarn of carded hair of Kashmir (cashmere) goats, of yarn count less than 19.35 metric, not put up for retail sale; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4533. A bill to extend the temporary reduction of duty on yarn of carded camel hair; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4534. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on biaxially oriented polypropylene film; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4535. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on thermoplastic biodegradable polymer blend; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4536. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 2-Chlorobenzyl chloride; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4537. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Methyl 2-[(4-methyl-5-oxo-3-propoxy-4,5-dihydro-[1,2,4]triazole-1-carbonyl)sulfamoyl]benzoate, sodium salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4538. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on Permethrin; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4539. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Tungsten carbide; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4540. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Tungsten concentrate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4541. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Tungsten oxide; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4542. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain modacrylic staple fibers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4543. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic staple fibers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4544. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic staple fibers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4545. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic staple fibers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4546. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic staple fibers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4547. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic filament tow; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4548. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic filament tow; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4549. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic fiber tow; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4550. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic staple fibers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4551. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic filament tow; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4552. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain acrylic or modacrylic staple fibers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4553. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain acrylic filament tow; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4554. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain modacrylic staple fibers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:
H.R. 4555. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Penthiopyrad technical; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:
H.R. 4556. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 4,6-dimethyl-2-pyrimidinamine; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:
H.R. 4557. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on carbamic acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:
H.R. 4558. A bill to extend and modify the temporarily suspension of duty on Bifenthrin; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:
H.R. 4559. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Carbofuran technical; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:
H.R. 4560. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Carbosulfan technical; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4561. A bill to reduce temporarily the duty on 5-Methylpyridine-2,3-dicarboxylic acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4562. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on 2-Acetylnicotinic acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4563. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on mixtures of 2-amino-2,3-dimethylbutanenitrile and toluene; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4564. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on 3,5-Difluoroaniline; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4565. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on Methyl methoxyacetate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4566. A bill to modify and extend the reduction of duty on Diethyl ketone; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4567. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Oxalic acid, dimethyl ester (DMO); to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4568. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Oxalic acid, diethyl ester (DEO); to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4569. A bill to reduce temporarily the duty on Carbamic acid, [4-chloro-2-fluoro-5-[[[[methyl(1-methylethyl amino]sulfonyl]amino]carbonyl]phenyl]-, ethyl ester (PCM); to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4570. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Ethyl 3-amino-4,4,4-trifluorocrotonate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.
By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:
H.R. 4571. A bill to reduce temporarily the duty on 5-Ethylpyridine-2,3-dicarboxylic acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4572. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Dinotefuran; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4573. A bill to extend and modify the reduction of duty on Bentazon, sodium salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4574. A bill to modify and extend the temporary reduction of duty on AE 0172747 Ether; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4575. A bill to modify and extend the temporary reduction of duty on Isoxaflutole; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4576. A bill to modify and extend the temporary reduction of duty on Clothianidin; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4577. A bill to extend and modify the temporary reduction of duty on mixtures containing Isoxaflutole and Cyprosulfamide; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4578. A bill to supsend temporarily the duty on Triadimefon; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4579. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on mixtures containing Thiencarbazone-methyl, Isoxadifen-ethyl, and Tembotrione; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4580. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on mixtures containing Trifloxystrobin, Clothianidin, Carboxin, and Metalaxyl; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4581. A bill to reduce temporarily the duty on 5-Methylpyridine-2,3-dicarboxylic acid dimethyl ester; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4582. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on staple fibers of viscose rayon, not carded, combed, or otherwise processed for spinning; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4583. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on staple fibers of viscose rayon, not carded, combed or otherwise processed for spinning; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4584. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on staple fibers of rayon, carded, combed, or otherwise processed for spinning; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4585. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on artificial staple fibers of viscose rayon, not carded, combed or otherwise processed for spinning; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4586. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on artificial staple fibers of viscose rayon, not carded, combed or otherwise processed for spinning; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4587. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on Reactive Red 266; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4588. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on Reactive Black 005; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4589. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Reactive Orange 131; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4590. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain window shade material; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4591. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain window shade material; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4592. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on Chloroacetic acid, sodium salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4593. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on acetyl chloride; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4594. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Octanoyl chloride; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4595. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on Glyoxylic Acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4596. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on sodium petroleum sulfonic acids, sodium salts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4597. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Mixtures of tetraacetylethylenediamine with extenders and additives; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4598. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 1-Propanonesulfonic acid, 2-methyl-2-[(1-oxo-2-propenyl)amino]-, monoammonium salt, polymer with 1-ethenyl-2-pyrrolidinone; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4599. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on esters and sodium esters of parahydroxybenzoic acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4600. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Ammonium polyacryloyldimethyl taurate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4601. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on Isobutyl 4-hydroxybenzoate and its sodium salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4602. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on filament tow of rayon; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4603. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on staple fibers of viscose rayon, not carded, combed, or otherwise processed for spinning; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4604. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for a national program to conduct and support activities toward the goal of significantly reducing the number of cases of overweight and obesity among individuals in the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 4605. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the eligibility of activities in Puerto Rico for the deduction for income attributable to domestic production activities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. REHBERG:

H.R. 4606. A bill to authorize the issuance of right-of-way permits for natural gas pipelines in Glacier National Park, and for other purpose; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. RIBBLE (for himself, Mr. ISSA, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. CARTER, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 4607. A bill to ensure economy and efficiency of Federal Government operations by establishing a moratorium on midnight rules during a President's final days in office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RIGELL (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia):

H.R. 4608. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve oversight and accountability for military housing projects carried out using the alternative authority provided by subchapter IV of chapter 169 of such title; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California (for herself, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. BACA, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. BASS of California, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARNAHAN, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. CHU, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FARR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. HAHN, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. HOLT, Mr. HONDA, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mrs. LOWEY, Mrs. MALONEY, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OLVER, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. POLIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. STARK, Mr. TONKO, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WELCH, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. BONAMICI, and Ms. HIRONO):

H.R. 4609. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of permanent partnerships between individuals of the same gender as marriage for purposes of determining entitlement to benefits under such title; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4610. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 2-methyl-4-methoxy-6-methylamino-1,3,5-triazine; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4611. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 2-amino-4-methoxy-6-methyl-1,3,5-triazine; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4612. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 3-(ethylsulfonyl)-2-pyridinesulfonamide; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4613. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Fluthiacet-methyl technical; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4614. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on Carfentrazone-ethyl and formulations thereof; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4615. A bill to extend and modify the reduction of the duty on Sulfentrazone; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4616. A bill to reduce temporarily the duty on Pyroxasulfone; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4617. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain used fuel, lubricating, or cooling medium pumps; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4618. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain used compression-ignition internal combustion piston engines; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4619. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain used gear boxes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 4620. A bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to add certain counties in the State of Mississippi to the region represented by the Appalachian Regional Commission; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. NORTON (for herself and Mr. DENHAM):

H. Con. Res. 118. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself and Ms. LEE of California):

H. Con. Res. 119. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that involuntary homelessness for families, women, and children in America should be eliminated; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RAHALL, and Mr. LOBIONDO):

H. Con. Res. 120. Concurrent resolution supporting the goal of preventing and effectively treating Alzheimer's disease by the year 2025, as articulated in the draft National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease from the Department of Health and Human Services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GOSAR:

H. Res. 630. A resolution expressing support for Israel and its right to self-defense against the illegal nuclear program by the Islamic Republic of Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. GARDNER:

H.R. 4480.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, clause 2

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4481.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4482.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 4483.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 4484.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section III, Clause II of the Constitution.

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 4485.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the powers granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 11, 12, and 13 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MANZULLO:

H.R. 4486.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MANZULLO:

H.R. 4487.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4488.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4489.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4490.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4491.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4492.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4493.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4494.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4495.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mrs. BIGGERT:

H.R. 4496.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4497.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, sec. 8

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4498.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, sec. 8

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4499.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, sec. 8

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4500.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, sec. 8

By Mr. BISHOP of Georgia:

H.R. 4501.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, sec. 8

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 4502.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1 & 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 4503.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1 & 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 4504.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1 & 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 4505.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1 & 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4506.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4507.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4508.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 4509.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4510.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4511.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4512.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4513.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4514.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4515.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4516.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4517.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4518.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4519.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COBLE:
H.R. 4520.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4521.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4522.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4523.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4524.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4525.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4526.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4527.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4528.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4529.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4530.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4531.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4532.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4533.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4534.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mr. COURTNEY:
H.R. 4535.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations).
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4536.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article. I. Section. 8. Clause 1. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;
By extension of this Clause, Congress may also set the level of said duties including lowering them to zero where warranted.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4537.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article. I. Section. 8. Clause 1. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;
By extension of this Clause, Congress may also set the level of said duties including lowering them to zero where warranted.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4538.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article. I. Section. 8. Clause 1. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;
By extension of this Clause, Congress may also set the level of said duties including lowering them to zero where warranted.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4539.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article. I. Section. 8. Clause 1. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;
By extension of the clause, Congress may also set the level of said duties including lowering them to zero where warranted.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4540.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article. I. Section. 8. Clause 1. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect. Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;
By extension of the clause, Congress may also set the level of said duties including lowering them to zero where warranted.
By Mrs. ELLMERS:
H.R. 4541.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;
By extension of the clause, Congress may also set the level of said duties including lowering them to zero where warranted.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4542.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4543.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.
By Mr. JONES:
H.R. 4544.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4545.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4546.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4547.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4548.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4549.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4550.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4551.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4552.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4553.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4554.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the ''Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,'' and to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations''.

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:

H.R. 4555.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:

H.R. 4556.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:

H.R. 4557.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:

H.R. 4558.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:

H.R. 4559.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois:

H.R. 4560.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4561.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4562.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4563.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4564.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4565.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4566.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4567.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4568.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4569.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4570.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4571.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4572.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4573.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4574.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4575.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4576.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4577.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4578.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4579.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4580.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4581.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4582.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4583.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4584.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4585.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4586.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4587.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4588.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4589.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4590.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4591.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4592.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4593.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4594.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4595.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4596.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4597.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4598.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4599.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4600.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4601.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4602.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 4603.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads:

''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.'

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4604.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 4605.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to lay and collect taxes and to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution; to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution such powers as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution; and to make rules and regulations respecting the U.S. territories, as enumerated in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. REHBERG:

H.R. 4606.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RIBBLE:

H.R. 4607.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. I, Sec. 8

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. RIGELL:

H.R. 4608.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 14: To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 17: To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards and other needful Buildings;

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California:

H.R. 4609.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4610.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4611.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4612.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4613.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4614.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4615.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4616.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4617.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4618.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 4619.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 4620.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 14.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 85: Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas and Ms. RICHARDSON.
H.R. 104: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 139: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 187: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 329: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 360: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 365: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 466: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 587: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 733: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mrs. NOEM.
H.R. 757: Mr. BASS of New Hampshire.
H.R. 805: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 812: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 816: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 889: Mr. HEINRICH.
H.R. 941: Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 942: Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky.
H.R. 1006: Mr. BARTLETT.
H.R. 1066: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 1161: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H.R. 1167: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 1182: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 1236: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 1244: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 1265: Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. WESTMORELAND, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 1296: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 1327: Mr. BARTLETT, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DOYLE, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H.R. 1331: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 1448: Mr. RANGEL and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
H.R. 1463: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 1513: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H.R. 1519: Mr. CRITZ.
H.R. 1546: Mr. WALDEN, Mr. LANCE, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 1579: Ms. FUDGE.
H.R. 1588: Mr. KELLY.
H.R. 1612: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.
H.R. 1666: Mr. BOREN.
H.R. 1738: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 1842: Mr. SERRANO and Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 1897: Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 1951: Mr. HEINRICH.
H.R. 1960: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 1964: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H.R. 2020: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 2082: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 2182: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H.R. 2206: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2212: Mr. TOWNS.
H.R. 2226: Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 2269: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.
H.R. 2479: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 2541: Mr. HURT.
H.R. 2568: Mr. LONG.
H.R. 2569: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.R. 2592: Mr. PAUL.
H.R. 2597: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 2617: Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 2655: Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 2680: Mr. STEARNS.
H.R. 2705: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
H.R. 2721: Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.
H.R. 2746: Mr. TOWNS, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2827: Mr. WOMACK, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. LUCAS.
H.R. 2950: Mr. ANDREWS.
H.R. 2951: Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. ROSS of Florida.
H.R. 2966: Mr. ALTMIRE and Mr. RIVERA.
H.R. 2978: Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado.
H.R. 2989: Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 3032: Ms. RICHARDSON.
H.R. 3044: Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 3059: Mr. CARNEY and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H.R. 3068: Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina.
H.R. 3096: Mr. PLATTS.
H.R. 3173: Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. HANNA, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 3179: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. HANABUSA, Mr. ELLISON, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 3187: Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. BACA, Mr. BOREN, Mr. TURNER of New York, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. HAHN, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mr. HANABUSA.
H.R. 3200: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 3203: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 3208: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 3423: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Mr. ROSS of Florida.
H.R. 3485: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 3506: Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 3591: Mr. GIBSON and Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 3596: Ms. MOORE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. CHU, and Mr. VISCLOSKY.
H.R. 3612: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. WEST, and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 3618: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. CLARKE of Michigan, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. OLVER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. HINCHEY.
H.R. 3627: Mr. DOYLE and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 3665: Mr. MARKEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3721: Mr. GRIMM.
H.R. 3729: Mr. NEAL, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. ROSS of Florida.
H.R. 3797: Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 3798: Ms. SPEIER, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 3809: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 3826: Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. HANABUSA, Mr. KIND, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. KISSELL, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. BACA, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SERRANO, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. PIERLUISI, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 3848: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. LONG, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.R. 3881: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 3895: Ms. BUERKLE.
H.R. 3903: Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 3905: Mr. CARNAHAN.
H.R. 3974: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 3991: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 4004: Ms. BONAMICI and Mr. GARDNER.
H.R. 4029: Mr. GIBBS.
H.R. 4045: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.
H.R. 4057: Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 4060: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4063: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 4070: Mr. AUSTRIA and Mr. BARROW.
H.R. 4077: Mr. YODER.
H.R. 4124: Mr. QUIGLEY and Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 4134: Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. WOMACK, and Mr. SCHOCK.
H.R. 4142: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4144: Ms. RICHARDSON.
H.R. 4160: Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 4164: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 4169: Mr. SHERMAN and Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 4170: Mr. BOREN and Ms. SPEIER.
H.R. 4199: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 4209: Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. BONNER, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H.R. 4222: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 4228: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado.
H.R. 4232: Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 4243: Mr. MARINO and Mr. SHIMKUS.
H.R. 4256: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. MANZULLO.
H.R. 4271: Mr. BERMAN, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. BOSWELL.
H.R. 4277: Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLARKE of Michigan, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. HOLT, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. NADLER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OLVER, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. STARK, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. WATERS, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 4278: Mr. LONG, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 4332: Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 4345: Mr. LATHAM.
H.R. 4351: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 4367: Mr. RENACCI, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. JONES, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H.R. 4385: Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. ROSS of Florida, Mrs. BLACK, Ms. JENKINS, and Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 4388: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, and Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 4390: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 4454: Mr. BARLETTA and Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 4470: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. RICHARDSON.
H.J. Res. 13: Mr. RIGELL and Mr. GOSAR.
H.J. Res. 88: Mr. NEAL.
H.J. Res. 103: Mr. BONNER, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
H.J. Res. 104: Mr. FORBES.
H. Con. Res. 63: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. LATOURETTE, and Mr. FILNER.
H. Con. Res. 101: Mr. AMODEI and Mr. BACHUS.
H. Con. Res. 114: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H. Res. 57: Mr. STEARNS.
H. Res. 130: Mr. CARDOZA.
H. Res. 134: Mr. FORBES and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H. Res. 282: Mr. REICHERT.
H. Res. 298: Mr. FORBES.
H. Res. 304: Mr. HINCHEY and Mr. DEFAZIO.
H. Res. 507: Mr. FLORES.
H. Res. 583: Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. YODER, and Mr. CLAY.
H. Res. 601: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H. Res. 604: Mr. TIBERI and Mr. BROUN of Georgia.
H. Res. 608: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H. Res. 618: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA and Mr. DINGELL.
H. Res. 623: Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. BUERKLE, Mr. FLORES, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. YODER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. PAUL, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. ROSS of Arkansas, and Mr. BOSWELL.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 158 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2012 No. 59

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, our Sustainer, silence everything in our Senators that would keep them from hearing Your wisdom. Control their minds this day that their focus may concentrate on You. Illuminate their path with the light of Your presence, providing them with the strength to walk with integrity.

Lord, give them a sense of duty that they will leave nothing that they ought to do undone. May they not be content to wait and see what will happen, but give them the wisdom and courage to make the right things happen.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 24, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Senator from the State of Connecticut, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUYE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL 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. Mr. President, the Senate will soon be considering the motion to proceed to S. 1925, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act.

At 10:30 this morning, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 36, which is a resolution of disapproval regarding the NLRB election rule. The time until 12:30 today will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders, or their designees.

The Senate will recess from 12:50 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

At 2:15 p.m., there will be a rollcall vote on the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 36. If that motion is defeated, there will be several votes following it in order to complete action on the postal reform bill.

We are going to do our utmost to finish the postal reform bill today. I recognize that there is an important event with the Supreme Court today with the legislative branch, the Senate. Therefore, we might have to come back after that to complete work on this bill, unless there is a way forward.

I suggest to everyone, if their amendments can be accepted by voice vote, take that. If something can be worked out with the managers, do that; otherwise, we might be here until very late tonight. I would like to avoid that, if possible, for everyone's benefit.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in 1994, the Violence Against Women Act passed both Houses of Congress on strong bipartisan votes. In the 18 years since then, incidents of domestic violence have fallen by 53 percent.

Despite that progress, staggering rates of abuse make it clear that we still have a long way to go. More than a third of women and more than a quarter of men in this country have been victims of violent sexual assault or stalking by a partner. Because of the unique nature of the crime, combating domestic violence and protecting those affected also requires unique tools.

Victims have been abused by the very people who are supposed to love and care for them, so Congress must make certain law enforcement has the means to stop these heinous crimes, and we must ensure communities have the resources to support victims and help them heal. That is why the Senate must move quickly to reauthorize this legislation, which expired last year.

Many of the programs under the act have been funded for the last year by continuing resolutions, but a full reauthorization is necessary to ensure authorities have all the resources they need to fight domestic violence.

Women and families across the country are depending on us to act. Several from Nevada wrote to share their stories.

When I practiced law, this law was not in effect. The only good news during that period of time that developed as I began to do more work in the domestic relations field was as a result of some generous people establishing in Las Vegas a domestic crisis shelter. What is that? It is a place where women and children can go to stay away from husbands who were abusing them. It is so important. These are secret locations; you cannot find them in the phone book. It gives these women and their children—sometimes just a woman—a place to go.

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

Printed on recycled paper.

I had a leadership meeting this morning and spent some time talking to them about some examples of things that took place before this law passed. It was very difficult to find ways of helping these women. With this law, it is much easier. We must continue this extremely important legislation. The women who wrote to me had some very sad stories. Without this legislation, it would be even worse.

Coincidentally, I talked to Vice President BIDEN this morning and reminded him of what he had done. He has been watching what we do here. He said thanks for continuing this legislation. It was his idea, and it has been extremely valuable for this country.

Every day in America, three less fortunate women die at the hands of their abusers—by being abused by their spouses. In addition to those three who die, there are nine more who are abused very much. They have serious injuries. Some have been made paralyzed as a result of the beatings. It is hard to believe these beatings take place, but they do. It is in our power—the 100 of us—to protect them and help them.

Reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act would help law enforcement continue to develop effective strategies to prosecute cases involving violent crimes against women. But also, in addition to the criminal aspect of it, it allows these women a place to go.

It would provide funding for shelters and transitional housing programs for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and it would help victims get back on their feet. It would make legal assistance available to victims of violence, and it would safeguard children victimized and affected by dating violence and stalking.

This reauthorization would also enact important improvements to the law, gleaned from 18 years of experience combating violence against women.

It would extend better protections for Native American women. The most significant spousal abuse and abuse to children takes place on Indian reservations. This legislation will enlarge the breadth of the bill to protect these people who are so badly in need of help.

This legislation also includes nondiscrimination protection for all victims, regardless of what they look like or where they are from.

It reduces bureaucracy and implements new accountability measures to ensure Federal investments are properly spent.

It places great emphasis on training police to respond to reports of sexual assault, which has among the lowest conviction rates for any violent crime. For police officers, it is one of the most dangerous things they can do. Last year, we had a peace officer in Las Vegas—a sergeant who had been in law enforcement many years—who went with another officer to respond to a domestic violence phone call. He was shot and killed as he walked in the door. So we do need to understand that we need to continue to help train police and also make them better trained to convict the people doing these bad things.

Many years ago, when I was a freshman in the Senate, I held a hearing, under the auspices of the Appropriations Committee, on spousal abuse. Maybe things have changed over the years—and I hope they have. There are better counseling programs. But one thing we learned during those hearings many decades ago was that the main thing that helped a man stop abusing his wife was to put him in jail. Maybe things are better now. At least we need to have better tools to make it so these people can be convicted of these brutal crimes.

We know the tools and training this legislation provides are effective. Consider this legislation's successful record of reducing domestic violence by 53 percent and helping police punish these abusers. We need to do better, but what we have done has been a big step forward from the time I was holding those hearings, before this legislation became effective.

That is why the Senate reauthorized this law unanimously in 2005, on a 95-to-0 vote. That is pretty good. Again, in 2005, we did it unanimously. And in 2000, we did it by a 95-to-0 vote. Both times it was unanimous. I hope we can do it again.

I look forward to a similar bipartisan vote this year, as Democrats and Republicans join together to renew our national commitment to ending domestic violence.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, before the majority leader leaves the floor, with regard to the Violence Against Women Act, we would be very happy to enter into a short time agreement. He is entirely correct; this law has passed in the Senate on an overwhelming bipartisan basis, and there is very strong bipartisan support for it again this year. We are happy to work with him to expeditiously approve that bill in short order. Those discussions over some kind of a very short time agreement could begin as soon as now. We are happy to work with him to facilitate passage of that.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I think that is a positive statement, as long as there are not efforts made to weaken this legislation. But if this moves forward quickly with a short time agreement, but in an effort to weaken the bill, we want no part of that.

I look forward to conversations to begin with staff and to bring in Senator LEAHY and others, and Senator MCCONNELL and I can work on this.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, there is no reason to fight over something that nobody wants to have a fight over. We are happy to work on a reasonable time agreement and pass that in short order.

BROKEN PROMISES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is no secret that most Americans are tired of candidates for political office who make promises they don't keep. And who can blame them? For years, politicians have been going to Washington promising to make government more effective, more efficient, to balance the books, make life more secure, and restore Americans' confidence in their country again. And time and time again, they have either failed to get it done or didn't even make an effort in the first place.

Frankly, it is hard to think of any politician who has promised more and delivered less than our current President. He was the one who would erase old divisions and bring people together. He was the one who would rise above politics as usual and usher in a new era of bipartisan harmony. A lot of people believed him. Naturally, a lot of them are even more jaded now than ever. They are jaded because a candidate who said he was different turned out to be just another politician who seems more concerned with reelection than reform. Not only has he failed to step up to the challenges we face, he has actually aggravated them. Social Security, for example, is now expected to go broke 3 years sooner than we expected. The Tax Code is more complicated than ever. The national debt is bigger than any of us could have imagined. Health care costs are higher. Gas prices are up. Millions cannot find work. And even most college graduates—those best equipped to step into the modern economy—either cannot find work to match their skills or can't find any work at all.

Instead of fixing problems, he has made them worse.

What is he doing now? Well, the President who was supposed to change the direction of the country now wants to change the subject. He spends his days running around the country blaming whatever doesn't happen to poll well that day for the consequences of his own policies. He spent 2 years expanding government and constricting free enterprise, and now that the results are in he spends his time pointing the finger at others for problems that originated right in his White House. It is the millionaires; it is the banks; it is big oil; it is the weather; it is Fox News; it is anything but him. And it's absurd. I mean, if you believe that a President who got everything he wanted for 2 years—2 whole years—has nothing to do with the problems we face, then I have a solar panel company to sell you.

The President spent 2 years reshaping America in the image of Western

Europe, and now he wants us to believe our economy is performing as if a Western European economy has nothing to do with it.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the challenges facing the young people in America today. As we all know, one of the defining characteristics of Western European economies is the high unemployment rate, particularly among young people and recent college graduates. Sluggish growth and inflexible labor laws are two of the main reasons young people have been locked out of the labor market in those countries literally for years. Today unemployment is above 20 percent among young people in the European Union. In Spain the unemployment rate among people under the age of 25 is a staggering 50 percent.

Some of this is no doubt a result of the European debt crisis, but the more fundamental problem is decades of policies rooted in the same big government vision the President has been busy imposing right here in the United States. It is hardly a coincidence that as President Obama has tried to reshape the United States in the image of Western Europe, our own youth unemployment rate has been stubbornly high. That is what happens when you increase regulations on businesses that hire college graduates. That is what happens when you impose health care mandates on them. That is what happens when you impose new labor rules, such as the one Senator ENZI is leading the charge against this week that makes it even costlier for businesses to hire. We see the long-term effects of these things in Europe, and unless this President changes course we will see the same lack of opportunity for young people right here.

So today the President will bring his latest poll-tested message to the students at the University of North Carolina, and I am sure he will give a very rousing speech full of straw men and villains who stand in the way of their dreams. I am sure he will also express his strong support for things on which all of us already agree. But what he will not talk about is the extent to which the decisions he has made are limiting their opportunities in the years ahead.

Some of them already see this. I mean, you have to think most of these students are sharp enough to put this President's rhetoric up against his record and to conclude that it simply doesn't add up. As the promises of this President's campaign collide with real life, I think young people across the country will realize they got sold a bill of goods. The next time they are promised change, they will know enough to kick the tires first.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2012, PART II

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4348) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund pending enactment of a multiyear law reauthorizing such programs, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, all after the enacting clause is stricken and the text of S. 1813, as passed by the Senate, is inserted in lieu thereof.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the bill (H.R. 4348), as amended, is passed and the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

Under the previous order, the Senate insists on its amendment, requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses, and the Chair appoints the following conferees on the part of the Senate.

The Acting President pro tempore appointed Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. SHELBY, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and Mr. HOEVEN conferees on the part of the Senate.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2011—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1925, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 1925, a bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from California.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ACT

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am very pleased with what just happened at the desk. For those who didn't follow it, the majority leader, Senator REID, and Senator MCCONNELL, just named the conferees so we can get moving with the House and settle our differences and move forward with a very important transportation bill.

We all know how hard it has been on the construction industry. We all know the housing crisis has made it very difficult for our construction workers to get work. We all know at the same moment we have had this real problem in the construction industry—where we have well over 1 million construction workers out of work and tens of thousands of businesses that want to do construction work—70,000 of our bridges are failing, half of our roads are in disrepair, and the American people expect an infrastructure that meets the needs of the strongest economy in the world, our economy.

So I am very pleased with what just happened. I am very pleased we see the continuation over here of bipartisan support for a transportation bill. We have Senator REID working together with Senator MCCONNELL to name the conferees, and we had a unanimous vote in our committee last year on this bill. It has been a very tortured path to get to where we are now because, for some inexplicable reason, the Republicans over in the House have insisted on just going to their own party to reach agreement rather than going to the Democrats so we can have bipartisanship over there. But I am very hopeful, with the naming of these conferees today, the House will now do its job and name conferees. I have been reading in the press that perhaps that will happen tomorrow. So I am very hopeful.

Mr. President, it is 10:20 in the morning on Tuesday, and I want to call attention to the fact we are now on the path we need to be on, starting at this moment, to get to conference. There is no reason we can't do that very soon when so much is at stake.

The Senate bill is a reform bill. There are no earmarks in that bill. That bill is fully paid for. It doesn't add to the deficit. It protects 2 million jobs and creates another 1 million jobs. What good news will it be for this economy to have this bill pass.

I know there are those who predicted this could never happen; that, A, we would never get a bipartisan bill out of our committee, but we did it; that, B, we would never get it to pass on the floor, but we did it with 74 votes; and, C, that the House will never act, and the House actually did act to move to conference. It took them a long time, but we are there. So there is no reason we cannot work together to get this done.

If Senator INHOFE and I can agree, then I think we should be able to get a very strong bill through both Houses. On my committee—the Environment and Public Works Committee, which I am so privileged to chair—we have very conservative members, such as Senators INHOFE and SESSIONS, and very progressive members, such as myself. We have Senator VITTER on the other side and Senator SESSIONS, and on this side we have Senators SANDERS and CARDIN. So we have members who reach the entire ideological spectrum, and if we can all vote for a bill, then this can happen and it will send a great signal to this country.

I thank all the groups that have worked so hard to bring pressure on all of us to keep this moving forward. It starts with a coalition that includes the AFL–CIO and the chamber of commerce. Good for them. They do not always agree, but they agree on this one.

Then we have all the business community that is behind us—the granite people and the cement people and the general contractors. The list goes on and on. There are many groups that have come together to push forward on this bill.

So I want to mark this moment. I am happy I was able to be on the Senate floor when the conferees were named. It is a great list of conferees.

We have in this bill the RESTORE Act, which will rebuild the gulf after the terrible BP spill, and we have people on this conference who were very instrumental in writing the RESTORE Act, including Senator BILL NELSON and Senator RICHARD SHELBY. Senator VITTER also was involved, and I want to take a moment to thank Senator LANDRIEU, who was a driving force on this bill. There is no question that without her insistence this wouldn't have happened. So what an opportunity we have.

Now, there are certain things I think we should keep out of this conference, and that is things that tear us apart. There is no reason to have controversy built into this conference. We can save those battles for another day. I think, with this conference, we should just all rally around the consensus of what has to be done. If it is something outside the scope of the conference, if it is unanimous and everybody thinks it is a good idea—such as the RESTORE Act—then let's do it.

There is a provision in the bill that helps our rural counties use the proceeds from timber sales for their schools—this is so critical—and for their local governments. One could argue it is not part of the transportation program, but it is a consensus. It is a coming together, and where we can do that it is very important we stick with those consensus items and stay away from the highly charged controversies. We have plenty of time for that. We don't have to put that into this conference. So I look forward to the House naming their conferees so we can get this done.

I also want to say how important it is that we pass the Violence Against Women Act. This bill, which has 61 cosponsors—it is my understanding that is the case—is a strong bill, and it makes sure people who are the victims of violence are taken care of, and it continues a great program that was put together by then-Senator JOE BIDEN.

I remember it well because I was in the House at the time and then-Senator BIDEN, now Vice President BIDEN, doing such a great job, spoke to me and said: Congresswoman BOXER, would you be willing to carry the House version of the Violence Against Women Act? This was in the early 1990s. I looked at the bill, read the bill, and said I would be honored to do so. I was so proud to work with JOE BIDEN on this issue. We had worked together on coastal issues and now we worked together, at that time, on violence against women.

I was able to get a couple of the provisions passed—a couple of, I would say, smaller provisions passed: safety on campuses, campus lighting, and some other things. But the heart of the bill did not pass until I actually was over here in the Senate, when Senator BIDEN really picked up steam and drove that bill through. My understanding is that Senator SCHUMER—at that time in the House—picked up the bill and did the same in the House.

This has been the law of the land—the Violence Against Women Act—since the 1990s, so we don't need to have any arguments about it. I was very glad to hear Senator MCCONNELL say he didn't intend to have any arguments about it because in this bill we cover even more people: people who were brutalized, women who were brutalized, and it is very key.

I see my colleague, Senator HARKIN, has come to discuss a very important matter, a labor matter, and I would tell him I will finish in about 3 minutes, if that is OK with him.

I want to conclude by saying that the Violence Against Women Act is what we call a no-brainer. It is a serious problem in our Nation. Senator REID said three women are killed every day because of violence against women.

The shelters in our States are doing incredible work. They take in women and children. They make sure there is protection and crack down on the violators and there is no reason to argue about that.

The last thing I wanted to talk about in the last couple minutes goes to the heart of what Senator MCCONNELL said in his leader time. I have noticed that almost every time Senator MCCONNELL has a chance on the Senate floor he comes and attacks President Obama and he goes after President Obama and blames him for everything under the sun. I have to say I support Senator MCCONNELL's right to say whatever he wants to say. He has every right to use his leadership powers to attack the President and do it as much as he wants. So I am not complaining about that. But I am just saying it is very unfortunate for this country that the Republican leader in the Senate said, and I quote—I am not quoting directly the words, but this is what he said—that his highest priority was making President Obama a one-term President, and he is carrying it out on the floor of this Senate.

The things he blames this President for are unbelievable. The way he attacks the President for being out around the country—he doesn't attack the Republican candidates for President for traveling around the country. Let's face it, it is a few months to the election. Does he expect the President to stay in the White House? I am glad the President is getting outside. I am glad the President is making speeches. I am glad the President is fighting for students. I am glad the President is fighting for senior citizens. I am glad the President is fighting for small business. I am glad he is fighting for fairness. Why should a billionaire pay a lower tax rate than a secretary? I am glad this President is doing all that. To hear him attacked day after day after day is absolutely discouraging when we have so much work we can do that we can talk about in our leader time. But I have decided I am going to follow this, and every time Senator MCCONNELL does this I am going to use my privileges as a Senator to come down.

Let's never forget, this President inherited the worst economy since the Great Depression from a Republican President who left us bleeding 800,000 jobs a month, who left us with an auto industry flat on its back, who left us with a credit system that was frozen. This President, through his leadership, stepped up and led us out of that mess. The other voices, the naysayers, said: Let Detroit go bankrupt. Stay out of everything. This President didn't listen because he is a fighter for change.

If this floor is going to be used to attack this President, count me in to stand and make sure the record is set straight. I hope we can go back to the work we need to do instead of using the floor of this great body to attack our President, the President of the United States of America. Everyone has a right to do it. Believe me, I don't argue that. But I also have the right as a Senator—and so do others—to come to clear the record on that, and I intend to do that.

I yield the floor.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NLRB RELATING TO REPRESENTATION ELECTION PROCEDURES—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 36, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 36, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to representation election procedures.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be 2 hours of debate, equally divided, between the leaders or their designees on the motion to proceed.

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield such time to the Senator from South Carolina as he may need.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I would like to thank the Senator from Wyoming for yielding but, more importantly, for his leadership on the subject that brings us all to the floor.

The National Labor Relations Board has gotten a lot of attention lately and

for reasons I don't think are too helpful to the cause. Obviously, being from South Carolina, their decision to entertain a complaint against the Boeing Company for moving to South Carolina, a complaint filed by the machinists union that sat on their desk for 1 year and then finally was brought forward by the NLRB to potentially close down the South Carolina site and move the facility back to Washington, thank God, is behind us now.

But at the end of the day, this organization, the National Labor Relations Board, seems to be hell bent on changing processes across the board more for political reason than a substantive reason.

What brings us here today is the rulemaking proposal to change the time for union elections for employees to vote on whether they want to be part of a union. It does away with the preelection consultation, the idea of the employer and the people wanting to represent the employees sitting down and seeing if they can work out a proposal or a compromise; it shortens the election time to as little as 10 days. So if you are in the company in question, you have a 10-day period before the election. The current mean average is 38 days.

I would argue this is being done not to make things more efficient but to change outcomes. Quite frankly, the outcome being desired is to make the union position stronger, not to make the system more efficient. That is what happens.

I expect a Republican President to nominate people to a board such as the NLRB with a business background. I expect a Democratic President to nominate people to the NLRB and like boards with maybe a more union background. But I expect the Board not to take the agency and turn it into a political organization and try to create by rulemaking what we can't create by legislating. That is what brings us here today.

The whole complaint filed by the machinists union in Washington, taking that complaint up that the move to South Carolina was somehow in retaliation against the union in Washington when no one lost their job in the State of Washington and no one's pay was reduced I think was taking the NLRB into an area it has never gone before.

This is just a continuation of that pattern and this is not good because the unelected aspect of our government, the NLRB and similar agencies, has a lot of sway over our economy. At a time when we are trying to make sure we create jobs in America and make it easier for people to locate their companies here, proposals such as this are undercutting what we need to be doing.

This is an unprecedented move. This kind of breathtaking change in the rules has only happened, I think, two or three times, and this was proposed as Mr. Becker was on the way out. Congress, under the Administrative Review Act, has an opportunity to stop this before it is too late. What this is being called on our side is sort of an ambush election.

The point we are trying to make is that by changing this rule to a 10-day period and doing away with preelection negotiations basically creates an environment where people are having to cast votes and not understanding who is going to be representing them or the nature of their decision. Why do we want to shorten an election? Why do we want to do away with the ability to negotiate between the employer and people who want to represent the employees?

I don't see this is addressing a problem that exists. I think this is more motivated by getting at an outcome rather than reforming a process. I hope some of our Democratic colleagues will say this is excessive and unnecessary.

If the Congress doesn't stand in the way between the American people and unelected bureaucrats, who will? This is your chance as a Member of Congress to do something about the unelected side of government that is growing more powerful by the day. We have a chance here to say no to a rule that makes no sense, that is going to skew the playing field and, quite frankly, I think represents the worst of special interest politics.

I hope Senators will take an opportunity to exercise their authority as a Member of Congress and say: Whoa. Time out. We don't need to go down this road. Let's let people understand who will be representing them, let the people who are going to vote in an election regarding unionization of the workplace to have a meaningful understanding of what they are about to vote on. There is no reason to shorten the process to 10 days. I doubt most of us would like our elections to be shortened to 10 days.

This is not about reforming an election process that is broken. It is about trying to change the outcome and skew it to the benefit of one side versus the other. Again, the rulemaking is not necessary. This is a chance for a Member of Congress to stand and say no to the unelected side of government at a time when somebody needs to say no to them.

I just hope and pray we can get some bipartisan support for this because Senator ENZI has done a very good job of trying to explain to the Senate and to our conference as a whole about what awaits the American workforce if this rule is changed, why it is unnecessary. It is not about reforming a broken process; it is trying to get an outcome where one side benefits versus the other.

I just hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will look at this as an opportunity for Congress to speak against the excessive rulemaking and what I think is an abuse of a process.

With that, I yield, and I appreciate very much the leadership of Senator ENZI.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from South Carolina, particularly for the insight on the way that this particular Board abused his State and found out they were wrong and got it all taken care of. But his comments are particularly valuable in dealing with this shortening of the time as well.

I thank him for speaking and I yield the floor.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

For more than 1 year, I have been working on a series of hearings, both in Washington, DC, and in Iowa, focusing on the state of the American middle class.

We have learned that the American middle class is disappearing, falling into the widening gulf between the haves and the have-nots. The people who do the real work in this country are being squeezed to the breaking point. Their paychecks aren't rising. Their benefits are disappearing. Their pensions are disappearing. Their jobs are being shipped overseas.

When we looked into the causes of this crisis, we found that the middle class is not disappearing due to some inevitable effect of forces beyond our control such as globalization and technology. In fact, the decline of the middle class is primarily due to policy failures. We have failed to respond to our changing economy, while at the same time we have allowed many of the underpinnings of a strong middle class, such as a fair minimum wage, strong overtime laws, and defined benefit pensions to disappear.

One of the biggest factors in this downward spiral has been the decline of American unions. As former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich explained when he testified before the HELP Committee last year, when unions were strong, the middle class thrived and our country prospered. In the mid-1950s, more than one-third of all American workers in the private sector were unionized and the unions demanded and received a fair slice of the American pie. Nonunionized companies, fearing their workers would otherwise want a union, offered similar deals. As employers boosted wages, the higher wages kept the machinery of our economy going by giving average workers more money to buy what they produced. That is what the former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich said.

But now, unfortunately, that productive cycle has broken down. Workers have lost their unions, and they don't have money in their pockets to spend and help grow the economy. That is costing us the jobs and holding back our economy.

There are lots of reasons for the decline in unions, but I think again this chart which I showed yesterday is instructive. If we look at the chart, from 1973 to 2010, we will see, first of all, in the green line is the number of workers

covered by collective bargaining agreements. Look how unionization has declined. Here is the union membership. These are the ones covered by collective bargaining agreements. Here is union membership going down the same way. The red line is the middle class share of national income. Look how it tracks it. So as union membership and collective bargaining has decreased, the middle class share of national income has decreased also, almost parallel. Again, lots of reasons, but I think a big one is the broken union election process. It has become so riddled with abuses that people are giving up on it altogether. As I mentioned in my remarks yesterday, the number of union representation elections has declined by an astounding 60 percent between 1997 and 2009. When workers do file for an NLRB election, 35 percent give up in the face of extreme employer intimidation and withdraw from the election before a vote is even held, and that is after they have already signed the card to petition for the NLRB to have an election, one-third of them never get to an election.

The rule we are discussing today cannot solve all of these problems, but as I said yesterday, it is a step in the right direction. It addresses some of the most abusive situations where unscrupulous companies are manipulating the process and creating delays so they can buy more time to intimidate workers.

The primary way management can cause delay is to raise challenges at the preelection hearing. Some of these disputes, such as challenging the eligibility of an individual voter, can certainly wait until after the election to be decided. That is what we do in elections across the country. If a voter's eligibility cannot be confirmed, they vote a provisional ballot until their eligibility can be verified. We don't stop an election from happening until every voter's eligibility can be confirmed. We don't do that. If there is a challenge, they vote a provisional ballot and after the election they see whether they were qualified to vote. Some of these challenges are downright silly, but they have their intended effect, and that is to delay.

In 2002, one employer raised a preelection challenge arguing that the International Association of Machinists was not a ''labor organization'' within the meaning of the statute. The NLRB actually held a hearing on this question and, of course, found that the machinists who had been representing workers since 1888 are indeed a labor union. But the election was delayed by a month to address that one issue.

Some anti-union consultants bragged openly about their ability to abuse the process and create delays. One union-busting law boasted on its Web site how a 27-day hearing contributed to a 5-month delay between filing of a petition and the election at a Massachusetts hospital organizing drive.

Why is delay so important to management who do not want to bargain in good faith with workers? Well, by delaying an NLRB election, they give themselves more time to conduct an anti-union campaign and make it more likely they will win.

One former anti-union consultant wrote a book that is very instructive. Everyone should read it. It is called ''Confessions of a Union Buster.'' He described his strategy as ''[c]hallenge everything . . . then take every challenge to a full hearing . . . then prolong each hearing'' as long as possible, then ''appeal every unfavorable decision.'' The consultant explained that ''if you make the union fight drag on long enough, workers . . . lose faith, lose interest, lose hope.'' Let me repeat that. This is from an anti-union consultant who wrote this book called ''Confessions of a Union Buster,'' and he said, ''if you make the union fight drag on long enough, workers . . . lose faith, lose interest, lose hope.''

The impact on workers is clear. In 2000, workers at Dillard's distribution center in Little Rock, AR, began efforts to organize a union with the Union of Needletrades Industrial and Textile Employees, UNITE for short. The campaign involved a unit of between 500 and 600 workers employed as pickers, packers, forklift drivers, loaders, other warehouse workers, many making just over the minimum wage.

Dillard's management began talking with workers about the union almost immediately after workers began signing cards—before the petition was even filed. Aware that the company was likely to quickly escalate its campaign, UNITE, the union, filed an election petition in the spring of 2000, a couple of weeks after it began meeting with workers. At the time it filed for the election, UNITE had signed union authorization cards from 65 to 70 percent of the workers to join a union.

Well, what happened? Soon after the union filed the election petition, the company began holding mandatory captive audience meetings and one-on-one meetings with all workers. Basically threats were made that if the union were to succeed, the distribution center might lose its competitiveness and be forced to shut down.

The employer also launched legal challenges to the workers' petition. Get this. The management claimed that all professional and white collar workers should be in the election unit—even those at the corporate headquarters in a separate building adjacent to the distribution center.

Well, the company forced a dispute that took months to resolve. The company didn't want the white collar workers in the union, but by challenging it and saying they should be in it, forced the NLRB to have a hearing that took months to resolve.

The company took advantage of this delay to continue its anti-union campaigning. It isolated union supporters by excluding them from captive audience meetings and changing their shifts or job locations. It distributed and posted anti-union literature and continued one-on-one meetings.

Support for the union began to wane as workers' fears grew. Workers felt they were under surveillance at work and could not discuss the union at the worksite or even outside the distribution center before or after their shifts. Workers grew too scared even to accept union materials that their fellow workers handed out outside of the plant gates. Attendance at general meetings and organizing committee meetings fell sharply over the months leading up to the election. After facing 2½ months of intense anti-union campaigning, workers voted against union representation by a margin of two to one. About 3 months before that, over 65 percent to 70 percent of the workers had signed a petition to form a union, but less than 3 months later, they voted two to one not to have a union.

The NLRB has put in place reasonable rules to limit the kind of game playing that the workers from Dillard's experienced. The NLRB hasn't tried to advantage or disadvantage workers or stop employers from spreading their message. All the board has done is send a clear message to employers. They cannot abuse the process to buy themselves more time to intimidate their workers. They get a fair period of time to convey the message, and then the workers deserve their day at the ballot box.

This is not the radical act of an out-of-control board. It won't even affect most employers, union or nonunion, one bit. As I pointed out yesterday, 90 percent of all of the petitions that are filed succeed without having NLRB input anyway. Management and workers get together and work things out. But it is in those 10 percent of companies that go on this massive campaign to intimidate and frighten workers, that is what this rule is aimed at.

Preventing abuses of our laws that keep workers from having a union is a small step in the right direction to help putting the middle class back on track.

When I talk about this, a lot of people say, well, isn't it against the law for management to fire workers for union activities? And I say, yes, it is. But what is the penalty? The penalty is basically nothing.

I pointed this out yesterday, and I will say it again. There was a young man in Iowa who had been organizing a union and was fired. He filed a petition with the NLRB and it took him about 3 years to settle the case. He found out that he had been fired because of union activities and the penalty for the company was to give him all of his back pay minus whatever he earned in between.

How many people can go for 2 or 3 years and not take care of their family and pay their mortgage and pay to put food on the table without having a job? So, of course, that intervening time this person had to work, all the wages were subtracted from whatever the

company had to pay him, and it turned out basically it was nothing. So there is no penalty. As I said, all the employer has to do is pay back wages minus an offset of whatever the worker made in between the time he was fired and the time the decision was made by the NLRB, so there is no penalty for the employers to do that.

So, again, allowing our labor laws to be abused is a policy choice. As I said in the beginning, a lot of the reason for the decline of the middle class in America is because of policy choices that are made here. We have tolerated these policy choices for far too long, these abuses. Working families have suffered as a result; union membership has declined. As I pointed out, the number of workers covered by collective bargaining agreements has declined, and the middle class has declined right along with it. There is much more we need to do to move these trends back in the right direction.

I recently introduced a comprehensive bill, the Rebuild America Act, that I think presents a bold agenda for restoring the American middle class. That agenda—everything from investing in the infrastructure to job retraining, better educational benefits, better pensions, raising the minimum wage—also has restoring the right to form a union to workers who have been unfairly denied this basic freedom. It would provide real penalties for employers who abuse and fire workers to bust unions and would try to restore real voice for the people who do the real work in this country.

I hope that once we vote today and uphold the NLRB's eminently sensible actions, we can move on and have a real debate about some of these important ideas about restoring the middle class in this country and building an economy that works for everyone.

I was listening to the comments made by my good friend from South Carolina, and he alluded to the recent situation with a complaint filed with the NLRB by the attorney for the NLRB. A year or so ago the general counsel's office filed a complaint with the NLRB that the Boeing company in Seattle had retaliated against its workers for union activity, that type of thing. The fact is the NLRB—the body my colleagues are attacking today—never acted on that. The company and the workers settled it. Isn't that what we want? But somehow to listen to my friend from South Carolina, he is saying he is even opposed to letting the general counsel file a complaint. Well, that takes away the basic right of anyone to have their grievances heard. So I hope that is not what my friend from South Carolina meant. I want to point out that I think there was a lot of abuse of the NLRB during that process even though the NLRB was doing exactly what we told them to do: Take into account all of the factors, look at all the evidence before you make a decision. That is what they were doing when it erupted here on the floor and a lot of political pressure was put on the NLRB. There were a lot of threats on the NLRB. And as it turned out, it all worked out because the union and Boeing got together, settled their differences and we moved ahead. That is the way it ought to be in our country.

We should not cut off the right of people to actually file a complaint if they have a complaint. The duty of the NLRB is to investigate and to take into account all of the factors before they issue any findings. But that never happened in that Boeing case because Boeing is a good business. Boeing is one of our great businesses in this country and does a lot for America. So you get the good businesses, and the Machinist Union is a great union, and they worked it out. That is the way things ought to be done, and 9 times out of 10 that is the way it happens.

What we are talking about here is the rules for NLRB to take care of those bad actors who are out there, and to give people who want to form a union at least a level playing field without having all of these abuses and delays and intimidations and things like that.

That is what the issue is about, and hopefully this afternoon we will have a good, affirmative vote to uphold the ability of the National Labor Relations Board to issue this ruling.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I wish to continue the debate a little bit on the Boeing situation because the company was creating 2,000 additional jobs—reducing none but creating 2,000 additional jobs—in South Carolina at a new plant. The NLRB general counsel, who was not confirmed by this body, went ahead and decided to investigate and work on a complaint and created a lot of concern for 2,000 employees who didn't know whether they would be able to work. The case actually wasn't settled.

I think the National Labor Relations Board realized they had made a mistake and, because of the national controversy it created, actually withdrew the case even though it could have taken about 3 or 4 years through the courts to take care of it, and we covered that situation in one of the hearings Senator HARKIN asked for. I thought the company did an outstanding job.

What we are talking about today relates a little bit to that because the South Carolina folks decertified in the small window they had, which says they weren't pleased with what they had been handed.

So some of these discussions are extremely important, and the time to do those is extremely important. So today we are renewing this debate on S.J. Res. 36, the Congressional Review Act Resolution of Disapproval to stop the National Labor Relations Board's ambush elections rule. This rule is the second formal rulemaking the National Labor Relations Board has pushed through in the last year—their third in the past 75 years. There was only one before this Board decided they would take unusual action. As I mentioned, the first rule has been struck down already by Federal courts because it went far beyond the agency's authority. This ambush elections rule is also being challenged in the courts, but it is set to go into effect in less than a week—on Monday, April 30—and that is why the Senate must act today to stop the National Labor Relations Board from stacking the odds against America's employees and small businesses.

During yesterday's debate, both sides got to air their concerns. I wish to respond to some of what I heard.

There was much talk about the 90 percent of elections that go forward under mutual agreement. The argument was that because both sides were able to come to an agreement and because the wide majority of elections occur in a timely fashion, parties should not mind losing their rights to raise issues prior to the election. This argument is turning the concept of coming to agreement on its head. Yes, it is true that 90 percent of elections occur under mutual agreement and occur in 38 to 56 days, but that is precisely because both sides have the ability to raise issues of concern, such as which employees belong in the bargaining unit, and have them resolved. In other words, both sides have incentives to make fair requests because the other side has the leverage of exercising the right to contest. When all of these rights are taken away and an election is scheduled in as few as 10 days, the result will be that less mutual agreement occurs.

The National Labor Relations Board has taken a process that is working well and becoming swifter year after year and turning it into a contentious process where the small business employer side feels entirely ambushed. If the National Labor Relations Board were truly intending to address the small minority of cases where long delays do occur, they should have drafted a rule that addressed only those cases.

Yesterday both Chairman HARKIN and I quoted Presidents from each other's parties. I quoted John F. Kennedy's statement during labor law debates in 1959 when he was a Senator here saying:

> There should be at least a 30 day interval between the request for an election and the holding of the election.

He went on to say:

> The 30-day waiting period is an additional safeguard against rushing employees into an election where they are unfamiliar with the issues.

I agree that one of the most important reasons for a waiting period is for the employees to learn more about the union they may join. This is in fairness to the employee.

In many cases, the election petition is the first time some employees have ever heard about the union. They want to know what the union's reputation is for honesty, keeping their promises, treating members well, and working well with the employer to make sure the business stays in business. Once a union is certified, it is very difficult for employees to vote it out if they decide to. Employees are barred from petitioning for decertification for a full year after the election and barred as well throughout the term of the collective bargaining agreement.

Employees should have a chance to understand that once they unionize, they will no longer be able to negotiate a raise individually with their employer. Exceptional performance will not be rewarded, and grievances cannot be brought straight to the employer but will instead have to go through the filter of union officials.

Chairman HARKIN quoted former President Dwight Eisenhower. I haven't had a chance to look up the quote's context, but the gist of it was that only a fool would oppose the right of an employee to join a union. My comment on that is that a vote for this resolution does absolutely nothing to diminish the right of any employee to form a union. This resolution will not change the law one bit. If we are able to stop the ambush elections rule, union elections will still occur in a median of 38 days, with nearly 92 percent occurring in 56 days, just as it is now. And I would even venture to guess that the unions will continue to win the majority of elections. Last year they set a new record by winning 71 percent of elections. That is under the old rule. So a vote for this resolution may please both those former Presidents, whom we all admire, and forcing a fast election—an ambush election—may irritate employees into a negative vote.

Now, I know the President issued a policy on this that says that if it comes to his desk, he will veto it, and that is his right. I checked the Constitution. The Constitution says we are an equal branch of government with the President. We do not serve for the President, we serve with the President. That could be a quote from Senator Byrd, who used to sit at that desk and pull out his copy of the Constitution and point out that the President gets to do what he wants to do, but we have a responsibility to do what we need to do.

In this case, one of the administrative branches is overreacting—doing something it should not do—and we need to say no. If it gets to the President's desk and he vetoes it, that is his part of the process, although I think that when the law was written, it should have been that if Congress, which passes the law and grants rulemaking authority, disagrees in the Senate and the House, that ought to be the end of it. It ought to be the end of a rule or regulation. It shouldn't be the beginning of the process where the President can veto it, because he is in charge of the side that created the rule. But our job should be to take a look at these things, decide if they are right or wrong, and if they are wrong, to vote against them as part of the process.

So I think many will be joining me on this resolution of disapproval—at least I hope they will. That is our job and our right.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I yield whatever time he may consume to my good friend the Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I join the distinguished leader of the committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions in opposing S.J. Res. 36 and supporting the National Labor Relations Board rule that would very simply modernize the process that workers use to decide whether they want to form a union.

Right from the start, let's be very clear about what is at stake. It is a rule that the National Labor Relations Board has formulated pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act set by the Congress of the United States after comment that was solicited from all of the relevant stakeholders and people who would be affected by it, and they are rules that are long overdue because of the inconsistency and delays that are endemic to the current process.

As I travel around the State of Connecticut and I hear from people around the country, I consistently hear about problems that exist under the present process for choosing a union. This rule does not determine the outcome; rather, it simply modernizes and improves the process, and it does it by a rulemaking process that is consistent with and pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, which is the way the Congress has said it should be done. In fact, it adopts the rulemaking procedure rather than doing it by individual cases, which is the way the U.S. Supreme Court and the courts of appeal have said to the Board it should do more often. So, far from raising constitutional questions or issues of procedural lack of process, the NLRB has acted in accordance with the will of the Congress and the Constitution in formulating this rule.

Why is it necessary? Well, for one thing, there are 34 regional offices of the National Labor Relations Board, and each of them has different policies and practices for processing election petitions. We are talking about petitions that are submitted by workers who want to form a union and can do so by election when at least 30 percent of those employees send the petition to the NLRB. The gap in time is an opportunity for intimidation by unscrupulous employers. Fortunately, they are a small minority of employers—but they exist—who wish to discourage or deter workers from forming a union. That intimidation is unacceptable. We should do everything we can to stop it.

Second, the delays themselves are intolerable. Some of those delays are years—as long as 13 years in some instances—and the gap in time discourages or deters the exercise of rights that are guaranteed under the law.

So this new rule is simply to modernize the process, end intimidation, and make sure that rights are made real, in real time, so that employees can exercise those rights without any discouragement from employers.

Are the employers free to communicate with workers? Of course they are. The rights of communication on the part of the employers are not eliminated by any means. Are they still part of the process? Yes, indeed, employers remain a part of the process if they wish to be. The effort here—in fact, as one of the employers who submitted comments to the NLRB said quite pointedly—from Catholic Healthcare West, a health care company with 31,000 employees, in its comments: ''Reforms proposed by the NLRB are not pro union or pro business, they are pro modernization'' and will ''modernize the representation election process by improving the board's current representation election procedures that result in unnecessary delays, allow unnecessary litigation, and fail to take advantage of modern communication technologies.''

That quote from an employer really says it all.

Some of the litigation is not only against the interests of employees, it also is costly to the employers, especially when it fails to succeed. It creates uncertainties for other employers, and it can block representation and lead again to unnecessary delays.

This rule has an impact on real people in Connecticut and around the country. To give you a couple of examples, registered nurses who are at a number of the hospitals in Connecticut have come to me about the need to reform this process. Members of the employee workforce at T-Mobile, for example—Chris Cozza, a technician at T-Mobile USA in Connecticut, joined with 14 colleagues, came to me to recount his experience. He filed for union representation with the support of the Communications Workers of America, the CWA. He experienced problems of exactly this kind because his rights were delayed and thereby almost denied. When T-Mobile USA filed a claim that officially challenged the status of the CWA as a labor organization, he could see—Chris Cozza and all of us could see—that clearly CWA is a labor organization. This tactic was simply a delaying one, and the NLRB rule would prevent the kind of frivolous challenges and frivolous litigation that occurred there.

Let me conclude by saying, as has been said already, this rule is neither prounion or proemployer. It is simply profairness. It is antidelay,

antifrivolous litigation, and it is profairness in the workplace.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

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

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, one of the things I have been checking on here is the statement that was made earlier that one in five people get fired for working on organizing. That statement is based on a phone survey of union activists for their estimate if an employee is terminated during an organizing drive. It is not based on fact. The fact is, unions only filed objections in approximately 1.5 percent of the elections, and that number includes objections based on many issues other than employee terminations.

Under the current law, it is illegal to terminate or discriminate in any way against an employee for their union activities. If this occurs during an organizing campaign, the National Labor Relations Board is required to rerun the election since it created an unfair election. This occurs in about 1 percent of all elections and has been decreasing in recent years. I would expect that to increase in succeeding years if this rule passes because this is an attack on small businesses and the small businesses will not have the necessary information to know what is legal and illegal, especially if they only have 10 days to get their act together.

The National Labor Relations Board can go even further if they believe a fair election is not possible. They can certify the union, regardless of the vote, and order the employer to bargain.

I have information on some of the studies that have been done on this, and the number does not come out nearly that high. Of course it is terrible if there is even one person who is fired for organizing activities but there is recourse that can be done.

I want to raise an important privacy issue that has come up as part of the National Labor Relations Board's ambush elections rule. One section of the initial proposed regulation concerned the private information of employees. It raised so much concern that it was dropped from the final rule. However, the National Labor Relations Board Chairman has publicly stated that he plans to push this and other dropped provisions into law later this year, now that President Obama's so-called recess appointments have created a full board.

Under the current law, employers are required to provide employees' names and addresses within 7 days once an election is set. The proposed rule would not only expand the type of personal information that an employer must turn over, but would require that information to be turned over within 2 days of an election being set. Of course, if we are moving it from 38 days down to 10 days, I can see where they would want it in 2 days instead of the 7 that has been normal. The expanded information that the National Labor Relations Board wants employers to give to unions includes all personal home phone numbers, cell phone numbers, e-mail addresses that the employer has for each employee. It also would demand work location, shift information, and employment classification.

Let's consider this for a moment. The National Labor Relations Board wants to give employers 48 hours to turn over information of employees who are eligible to vote, despite the fact that the employee's eligibility may not even be determined at that point because of the ambush elections rule, the elimination of this preelection hearing so those sorts of things can be worked out as to who is exactly going to be covered. In essence, an employer will be forced to turn over personal information of employees who may not even be in the bargaining unit. The rule even would have required that the employer alphabetize the lists.

The threat of this new invasion of privacy is very alarming to most people. The purpose of the information is so the union organizers can come to your home, call you, e-mail you, find you outside your work location and catch you before and after shifts. There is no prohibition on how many times the organizers can contact you or at what times. There is no ''opt out'' for those employees who simply do not want to be contacted. And there are no protections in place to ensure that the information does not go astray.

While a large part of this debate circles around the shortened election time and what that means for employers, with good reason, I do not want us to forget what this new rule could mean to the privacy of employees. Supporters of expanding the information provided to the unions claim the National Labor Relations Board is merely modernizing this standard. In this time of Internet scams, identity theft, online security breaches, and cyber bullying, protecting personal information is not something to be taken lightly. Union elections can be a very intense and emotional experience for employees and employers alike. The last thing we want is for an individual's personal information, such as an e-mail address, to be used as a harassment or bullying tool by an angered party.

I want my colleagues to know what is at stake in this debate. A successful Congressional Review Act petition also prohibits an agency from proposing any ''substantially similar'' regulation unless authorized by Congress. Therefore, by supporting my joint resolution, we could put a stop to the Board's future attempt to force employers to hand over more personal employee information.

I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution of disapproval. This is one of the most important votes we will have on labor issues this Congress. We need to let the National Labor Relations Board know that their duty as a Federal agency is to be the referee and decide what is fair for the parties involved based on the clear facts of the case. Their job is not to tip the scale in favor of one party or another. Tipping the scale is exactly what the National Labor Relations Board is doing with the ambush elections rule. Congress needs to step up and say ''no'' to the overbearing and burdensome nature of these regulations coming out of so-called independent agencies. You can do that by voting for my joint resolution, S.J. Res. 36.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, a couple things.

I keep hearing it stated that: ambush elections. I want to point out, there is no timetable set in these rules—none whatsoever. I keep hearing: 10 days and 7 days and all that. That is not set. There are no timetables at all. As I pointed out, 90 percent of NLRB elections are conducted under voluntary agreements between the parties, and those procedures are unchanged.

The current median time right now between when a petition is filed and when an election occurs is 37 to 38 days. Jackson Lewis, the Nation's biggest management-side law firm, said that—their attorney Michael Lotito told the Wall Street Journal he thinks the time under these rules would be shaved to between 19 and 23 days. Joe Trauger, vice president of the National Association of Manufacturers, says the elections would be held in 20 to 25 days under the new rules—hardly an ambush election.

The other issue I want to briefly mention has to do with the contacts—contacting and the right of privacy I heard here. Right now, the only way a union can contact people is at their homes—at their homes. The only information the union is allowed to get after the petition is filed is the addresses of the workers, their home addresses. What the Board is considering—but has not implemented—is allowing unions to have access to e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers. Well, it seems to me that is a lot less intrusive than going to someone's home.

Now, again, it is much harder, obviously, for a union organizer to go to a home. People go to their homes. They are with their families. They have their children. They are busy. That is more intrusive than e-mailing them, it seems to me. So I would hope we would look upon the possibility that they might say that having their e-mail addresses and phone numbers is less intrusive than going to their homes.

But that is not part of these rules whatsoever. They would still have to contact them at their home, and the only information the employer would have to give would be their home addresses.

Again, keeping in mind what these rules are—they are very modest rules. I keep hearing that: Well, there have only been three rules since the Board was comprised in 1938. Quite frankly, the Supreme Court and appeals courts have said, time and time again, they should do rulemaking because it is open, it is transparent, parties get to be heard. So I think this Board is being more open and more transparent than any Board before it.

This is not anything overwhelming, but it is a step in the right direction to make sure we level the playing field and we do not have these undue delays where the management can intimidate—intimidate—and I gave some examples of it, and I have a whole ream of examples of where management has delayed and delayed and delayed in order to intimidate workers so they would eventually vote not to form a union.

Again, an employer has the right to communicate to their employees all day long—in captive audiences, one-on-one meetings with supervisors. The union can only contact the worker at that worker's house, in the evening or on a weekend. So already the employer has much more opportunity to converse with and to get its views known to its workers than the union has—much more, all day long, at the job, on the job, through supervisors, one-on-one contacts, group meetings, over the loudspeaker, whatever it might be. So already there is much more ability for the management to weigh in on this than it is for the union.

The one thing we are trying to do with these rules is to say: Fine, you can continue to do that. There will still be that disparity between the ability of management to communicate to the workers and the union to communicate, but what these rules are saying is, fine, you can do that, but you cannot continue to do it month after month after month and wear the workers down and intimidate them, make them afraid of losing their jobs. And if you fire one person for union organizing, that sends a chill across everybody else. You say: Well, but that is illegal. Well, it may be illegal, but as I have pointed out, time and time again, there are no penalties for that. It may be illegal, but there are not much penalties for that. Management can always find some excuse—that they may have fired someone for something other than union activity, but everyone would know that person was fired because that person was trying to organize a union.

We are saying you cannot just continue to drag these things out month after month after month. The proposed rules simply say we will have elections, and if there are challenges, if there are challenges by the management as to who can vote in that election, then those challenges would be held until after the election and then see whether those individuals so challenged were really part of that unit and could vote or whether they could not and whether that would even make a difference.

Again, if there were 100, let's say, who signed a petition to form a union, and that was 50 percent of the workers out of 200, and the employer was challenging 5 of those, well, as it is now they could challenge those 5, have a hearing, appeal the hearing, appeal that, and just keep appealing it.

Well, the rules would say, OK, they can say those 5 are not part of it, their ballots would be set aside, and they would have the election. If the election was, let's say, 150 to 20 that they wanted to form a union, those 5 would not make a difference one way or the other. If, however, the election was very close and those 5 would make a difference, then the results would be held in abeyance until such time as it is determined whether those 5 so challenged were part of that bargaining unit or not.

To me, this is a much more fair and decisive way of moving ahead rather than these constant delays and intimidations that go on right now in some of the places—not all, not all, but in some of the places. It is like a lot of times we pass laws not because there are, let's say, broad-based incursions on a person's freedoms or certain things we want to address, but a lot of times we pass laws because there are a few bad actors out there one way or the other and we want to make sure those bad actors are not able to act unreasonably, kind of in violation of what was intended by the National Labor Relations Act.

So that is what they are all about. They are very modest and, I think, lend themselves to a much more reasonable path forward in union organizing and voting.

I ask unanimous consent if there is a quorum call that both sides be charged equally on the time.

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

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield myself such time as I may use.

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

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I do want to talk about this open and fair, transparent process that was just referred to. Much has been said about the flawed policy behind ambush elections we are discussing on the Senate floor. But I want to spend a few minutes discussing the rulemaking process that was followed or not followed for that matter by the National Labor Relations Board.

While the other side portrays the changes as moderate, make no mistake about it, this new rule greatly alters the election system, especially should Chairman Pearce be able to finalize the more controversial provisions that were previously proposed. This entire rule took under 1 year to complete. The National Labor Relations Board introduced the proposed rule on June 22, 2011, and published the final rule only 6 months later on December 22, 2011.

Considering the scope of the rule and how much attention it garnered from stakeholders, it is absurd to think that a Federal agency could promulgate a rule that would have such a major effect on all employers, in only 6 months. As evidence of how critical this rule's impact will be on stakeholders, the Board received 65,957 comments. Let me repeat that. The Board received 65,957 comments during the 60-day comment period. That is an astounding number.

To compare, the Board's previous rulemaking on its notice posting requirements garnered a little more than 6,000 comments. On November 30, 2011, the Board voted to move toward finalizing a new amended proposed rule. The reason for this new amended rule was clear: The Board was going to lose its quorum at the end of the congressional session in late December 2011.

What continues to astonish me is that the Chairman claimed his staff read each of the 65,957 comments, twice, in such a short period of time. In rushing to finalize the ambush elections rule, the Board discarded several well-established internal procedural precedents as well. For example, until the ambush election rule, the Board did not advance a major policy change without three affirmative votes. This was a major policy change.

They never did it without three affirmative votes, whether through rulemaking or a case decision. This was not the case in the ambush elections rule where only two members voted in favor of finalizing the rule. Further, the Board rejected the tradition of providing any dissenting member at least 90 days to produce an opinion. Instead, Chairman Pearce offered to publish a dissent after the final rule was published. The process the Board used to promulgate the ambush elections rule was rushed through for no good reason. Yet in the process it decided to discard years of Board precedent.

I should also mention one of these people, one of the two who voted for it, not three—one of the two who voted for the rule, and there were two who voted for it—was a recess appointment because they knew this body would not stand for that person with the radical views he held, actually claiming before his appointment that he would cause this sort of a thing to happen; that he would even be able to institute, through Board procedures, card check.

Now, that is a pretty radical statement, and that alone was keeping him opposed by both sides of the aisle. There were people on both sides of the aisle who opposed card check.

So two people voted for it; one person voted against it. That person was not allowed the right to put in a dissent opinion. That is wrong. That is not open and transparent.

Now I would like to talk a little bit about the targeting of small business

this regulation does as well. All of our States have a lot of small business. Small business is the backbone of job creation in this country. We need to make sure that process can still follow. Once a petition for representation is submitted, the current median timeframe for a union election to be held is 38 days. That is the median time. The ambush election rule would shorten that timeframe to as few as 10 days.

For small business owners, with the range of company responsibilities and limited resources, this puts them at a severe disadvantage. Most small business owners are not familiar with complex labor laws they have to adhere to during the representation election process. For example, they may not be aware that certain statements and actions could result in the National Labor Relations Board imposing a bargaining obligation without a secret ballot election. They can declare the election over. Furthermore, most small businesses do not have the resources to employ in-house counsel or human resource professionals familiar with these laws.

So holding an ambush election in as few as 10 days does not provide small business owners with enough time to retain a competent labor attorney, consult with them, and then adequately prepare for an election. I have given the reasons before why it is unfair to the employees. But it is also very unfair to a small business owner because their day-to-day responsibilities range from sustaining a competitive product, to managing personnel, to balancing the books at the end of the day. I know. I have been there. I had a shoe store. They have to do all of those things.

The definition by the Federal Government for a small business is 500 or less employees. In Wyoming that would be a big business. My definition of a small business is where the owner of the business has to sweep the sidewalks, clean the toilets, do the accounting, and wait on customers—and definitely not in that order. So those day-to-day responsibilities to keep the business competitive take a lot of time, and given such a demanding schedule, it takes time for a small business owner to fully understand the pros and cons of unionization. It takes even longer for a small business owner to communicate these points to their employees.

Ambush elections make it logistically impossible for small business owners to fully discuss the effects of unionization with their employees, partly because they will not even know what those effects are, and neither will their employees.

A union organizing campaign does not begin on the day an employer receives a petition for representation. It typically starts months or even years before, when professional union organizers start conveying their side of the story to targeted small business employees. They work on it for months. By unjustly curtailing an employer's ability to convey their point of view, ambush elections deny employees the opportunity to hear both sides of the argument on unionization.

The small business employer is also at a disadvantage because the union organizer will be in a position to set up the election to his best advantage, essentially cherry-picking union supporters before the election process begins. The organizers will have had limitless amounts of time to analyze which employees could be argued to belong in the bargaining unit, which may qualify as supervisors, and who is most likely to support a union.

With ambush elections, the National Labor Relations Board will impose the election before the employer has an opportunity to even question those assumptions, especially since we have significantly restricted the one tool—the preelection hearing—that the small businessman would have to question who is in and who is out.

According to a recent Bloomberg study, unions win 87 percent of secret ballot elections held 11 to 15 days, compared to a 58-percent rate when elections are held 36 to 40 days. By shortening the election timeframe, labor unions will undoubtedly win more representation elections—perhaps. The perhaps is that they may really irritate the employees and win less of them. The way that it is held in 11 to 15 days is when the employer and the employees agree on all of the issues and get the election to move forward. So it can happen in a short period of time right now. Otherwise, the median time would not be 38 days.

But I think this rule will alienate those people who have been getting together and arriving at these agreements. So for small business owners, the surge of union bargaining obligations means a less flexible workforce, increased labor costs, and fewer opportunities for job creation. And they are the job creators.

The National Labor Relations Board is only creating more uncertainty for small business at a time when the country needs them to focus on creating jobs. Small businesses account for over half of the jobs in the private sector and produce roughly one-half of the privately generated GDP in the country. In 2010, small businesses outpaced gross job gains of large businesses by 3 to 1.

As the National Labor Relations Board has publicly indicated, ambush elections are only the beginning of a round of regulations aimed at making it easier for unions to win representation elections in American workplaces. Proposed regulations, such as requiring small businesses to compile a list of employee phone numbers and e-mails and then handing them over to union organizers before an election are time consuming. They are costly. They are extremely invasive. Furthermore, they are indicative of how this administration is more concerned about boosting labor union membership than creating jobs.

We have to create jobs. We cannot continue to pick on the small businessman and put him at a disadvantage. This is a rule that is looking for a place to act. It is not one that was needed or requested other than by labor organizers. I think it will have repercussions. So I would ask everyone to vote for the resolution of disapproval so this does not go into effect, although we have been promised, of course, a Presidential veto if it makes it to his desk.

But that is Congress. We have the right to say we do not think the rule is right. The President has the right to say his administration is right and veto the law. But we have to make that statement, and we have to make it on behalf of small businesses and employees.

A lot of this has to do with employee fairness and giving them the time to figure out what the union will do with them and for them and to them.

I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Alabama for morning business, as I understand it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

POSTAL REFORM

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming for his thoughtful remarks on this important subject. I hope our colleagues are listening.

Later today, I will offer a budget point of order on the postal bill. It adds $34 billion to the debt. It violates the agreement we reached last August, in which we said there would be limits to how much debt we would increase and how much spending we would increase.

The first big bill coming down the pike adds $34 billion. Every penny of the new spending is added to the debt. There is no offset to it. Those of us who supported the concept of a limitation on spending—and I didn't think it limited it enough last summer, but many thought it did, but agreed to that limit—have to know this. When I raise that budget point of order, somebody will probably rise and ask for a vote to waive the budget, waive the limitations on spending and debt that we just passed last August.

We need not kill reform of the Postal Service. We need to send this bill back to the committee and let them produce legislation that either spends not so much or doesn't spend money or, if they do spend money, pay for it through cuts in spending that are perfectly available.

GAO has said there is over $400 billion spent each year in duplicative and wasteful programs. We have GSA off in Las Vegas in hot tubs on taxpayers' money. We could pay for this bill if it is so important that we have to do it; if we don't, that is what the vote would be.

I urge my colleagues to understand the importance of it. Our Members who believed it was important to have a

limit on spending in order to gain a debt increase last summer, increase the debt ceiling, should vote against the motion to waive because to do so—to vote for waiving the budget would undermine, in the first real opportunity, the agreement we reached.

I thank the Chair and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD three additional letters of support from the Motor and Equipment Manufacturers Association and National Council of Textile Organizers and the Building Owners and Managers Association International.

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

The Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA) represents over 700 companies that manufacture motor vehicle parts for use in the light vehicle and heavy-duty original equipment and aftermarket industries. Motor vehicle parts suppliers are the nation's largest manufacturing sector, directly employing over 685,000 U.S. workers and contributing to over 3.2 million jobs across the country.

MEMA urges your boss to support S.J. Res. 36 and help overturn the ''ambush election'' rule, which is part of the NLRB's aggressive and unchecked regulatory agenda. Parts manufacturers are very concerned by recent unnecessary and unwarranted actions by the NLRB that threaten employer-employee relations as well as job growth and productivity. MEMA members strongly oppose the NLRB's ambush election rule which would shorten the time frame during which union elections may be held, limiting an employer's ability to prepare for an election and an employee's opportunity to make an informed decision about joining a union.

Please contact Ann McCulloch at amcculloch@mema.org or 202–312–9241 with any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ANN WILSON,
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs, Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association.

BUILDING OWNERS AND MANAGERS ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL,
Washington, DC, April 24, 2012.

Hon. MIKE ENZI,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR RANKING MEMBER ENZI: The Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International urges you to support S.J. Res. 36, which will prevent the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) from moving forward with its ''ambush'' election rule. The rule is an attempt by the NLRB to enact the Employee Free Choice Act through regulation. The NLRB's actions are detrimental to workers, businesses and our economy and must be stopped.

Under the rule, building owners and managers and the companies they do business with could face an election held to determine whether or not the employees want union representation in as few as 14 days after the union files a petition. This would leave little or no opportunity to talk to employees about union representation or respond to any promises by union organizers—no matter how unrealistic. Union organizers lobby employees for months outside the workplace without an employer's knowledge, so these ''ambush'' elections would result in employees receiving only half the story. In an effort to rush the election, the rule also robs employers of free speech and due process rights. In fact, under the rule, the NLRB could even conduct elections before it settles which employees would be in the union. How is a worker supposed to make an informed choice about unions in these circumstances?

The median time from petition to election without this rule is a far more reasonable 31 days. The legislative record shows Congress intended an election period of at least 30 days in order to ''safeguard against rushing employees into an election where they are unfamiliar with the issues.''

The Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International is an international federation of more than 100 local associations and affiliated organizations. Founded in 1907, its 16,500-plus members own or manage more than nine billion square feet of commercial properties. BOMA International's mission is to enhance the human, intellectual and physical assets of the commercial real estate industry through advocacy, education, research, standards and information. On the Web at www.boma.org.

Again, on behalf of building owners and managers across the country, I urge you to support S.J. Res. 36 and help rein in this out-of-control agency.

Regards,

KAREN W. PENAFIEL,
Vice President, Advocacy.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEXTILE ORGANIZATIONS,
Washington, DC, April 24, 2012.

DEAR SENATOR: I am writing on behalf of the U.S. textile industry and the nearly 400,000 workers the industry employs. I am the president of the National Council of Textile Organizations and I urge you to support S.J. Res. 36 when it comes to a vote today. S.J. Res. 36 provides for congressional disapproval and nullification of the National Labor Relations Board's (NLRB or Board) rule related to representation election procedures. This ''ambush'' election rule is nothing more than the Board's attempt to enact the Employee Free Choice Act through the regulatory process and to deny employees and workers access to critical information about unions. In addition, the ''ambush'' election rule strips employers of their rights to free speech and due process. The rule poses a threat to employers and workers alike and needlessly interrupts an employer's day to day business operation.

The National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO) is a unique association representing the entire spectrum of the textile industry. From fibers to finished products, machinery manufacturers to power suppliers, NCTO is the voice of the U.S. textile industry. There are four separate councils that comprise the NCTO leadership structure, and each council represents a segment of the textile industry and elects its own officers who make up NCTO's Board of Directors.

NLRB statistics note that the average time from petition to election is 31 days, noting that over 90 percent of elections take place within 56 days. NCTO strongly believes that the current election time frames are reasonable, and permit workers time to hear from the union and the employer. The ability to take into account the perspectives of management and the unions allows workers to make informed decisions, which would not be possible under the new ambush election rule if allowed to go into effect. NCTO is particularly concerned about how our small and medium manufacturers would be affected by the rule's time frames; employers will not have the appropriate time to retain legal counsel, or to speak with workers about union representation. The reality is that union organizers are persuading workers for months outside the workplace without an employer's knowledge; these ''ambush'' elections would often result in workers'' hearing only one perspective on union membership. Workers would be made unrealistic promises that can't be kept and be offered guarantees of benefits that unions have no way of attaining. If the employer does not have an opportunity to explain their position and any possible inaccuracies that could be levied by the union, how can a worker make an informed and objective decision regarding representation?

For these reasons, NCTO urges you to vote yes on S.J. Res. 36 when the Senate votes today. If left unchecked, the actions of the NLRB will fuel economic uncertainty and have serious negative ramifications for millions of employers, U.S. workers, and consumers.

Sincerely,

CASS JOHNSON,
President.

Mr. ENZI. Also, there will be key vote alerts from the Associated Builders and Contractors, Associated General Contractors, Brick Industry Association, Competitive Enterprise Institute, Heritage Action for America, International Franchise Association, International Warehouse Logistics Association, National Grocers Association, National Association of Manufacturers, National Federation of Independent Business, National Restaurant Association, National Roofing Contractors Association, National Taxpayers Union, the Retail Industry Leaders Association, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ENZI. 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. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield up to 10 minutes to the Senator from Georgia, Mr. ISAKSON.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I haven't been able to hear all the speeches, but I commend Senator ENZI on his detailed and eloquent explanation on how we arrived where we are today.

I wish to add a history lesson of my own to tell you my journey in terms of where we are. As a student in college in the 1960s, in business management, I learned a lot about the Industrial Revolution, the labor revolution, the development of labor unions and labor/management practices as they developed from the 1920s until the 1960s and now up until today.

It is absolutely correct that the playing field was unlevel in the 1920s and

1930s. It is absolutely true that we had poor working conditions, safety risks were high, and wage-an-hour issues were debated. There was a place and an appropriate nature for us to level the playing field so management and labor could go together, head-to-head, and negotiate and arbitrate and have binding agreements upon themselves to protect the safety of workers and also improve the environment of the workers in the United States.

For 75 years those laws served us well. All of a sudden, it seems there is a perfect storm. From every corner, the NLRB seems to be making proposals to try to tilt the playing field away from fairness and equity and it is not right.

Last year, 70 percent of the elections for unionization in the United States of America were successful. There is not a problem in terms of people being able to organize and negotiate collectively. The problem is that the regulatory bodies are attempting to circumvent the legislative branch of government and to rule and regulate what they cannot pass on the floor of the Senate.

When Mr. Becker was appointed to the NLRB last year by the President, over the objection of the Senate and during the recess—it was an example of where the President used a recess appointment to go around the lack of approval, and advice and consent of the Senate.

This particular legislation we are talking about is similar to the specialty health care decision. The specialty health care decision allowed unions to create micro unions within the same working body, where there could be a plethora of unions in one store, all to fracture and fragment the ability of a business to cross-train and compete effectively. It is an attack on the free enterprise system and circumvents what our Founding Fathers intended us to do.

We have a legislative branch with the House and Senate; an executive branch with the President, the Vice President, the Cabinet and his appointees; and we have a court system. The President makes initiatives that go through the legislature. The legislative body takes initiatives and passes laws. Ultimately, the courts are the arbiters if either one or both ever challenges the ruling of one or the executive order of another. That is the way it should be. But right now we have a two-legged stool in America. Instead of legislative, executive, and judicial branches, we have a judicial and executive branch trying to run the country. We all know what happens to a two-legged stool. It falls over.

I talked with some businesspeople this morning who talked about the uncertainty of doing business in America. It didn't all have to do with ambush elections or specialty health care movements or special posters to promote unionization in the workplace, but they were part of it. The regulations that come from the administration through the Department of Labor, the National Labor Relations Board, the National Mediation Board, and a plethora of other organizations, are making it difficult for America to do business in a time where it is essential that we do business.

When the stimulus passed 18 to 24 months ago—maybe 30 now—it was designed to bring unemployment down to 6 percent. Unemployment remains above 8 percent, and one of the reasons it does is that the deployment of capital by businesses is not taking place because of the uncertainty of the workplace and what lies ahead, whether it is health care, whether it is ambush elections, card check, or whatever it might be.

So I come to the floor to commend the Senator from Wyoming for taking an initiative that is available to the Senate to bring a resolution of disapproval forward for a resolution of an executive branch body that circumvents the legislature itself. I hope he is successful in sending the message that it is time for us to take American politics and American justice and American legislation back to what our Founding Fathers intended.

Let's stop trying to take a playing field—one that has been level for 75 years, where we have had the greatest labor-management relations in the history of any country in the world—and tear it up or put us into a situation where we are adversaries, as we were 75 years ago. Let's stop the ambush election. Let's stop the arbitrary posting. Let's stop the specialized unionization. Let's stop all of this and return to the laws that have worked for three-quarters of a century. Three-quarters of a century is a great test of time. There is no reason now, through appointments to a regulatory body, to change the history of the Senate and the history of the court system.

I will end by quoting a President of the United States—a Democratic President of the United States—who, on April 21, 1959, was U.S. Senator John Fitzgerald Kennedy. In his campaign for the Presidency, he declared that elections should have at least 30 days between their call and the vote so employees can be fully informed on their choices from both sides of the issue. If it was right for John F. Kennedy on April 21, 1959, it is right for the Senate today, on April 24, 2012.

I commend the Senator from Wyoming on his presentation, his intensity, and his ability to bring this issue before the American people and to the floor of the Senate.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, how much time is remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa has 20 minutes, and the Senator from Wyoming has 12 minutes.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, there are just a couple of things I wish to bring up in response to some of the statements that have been made on the floor.

First of all, I wish to make it very clear that the NLRB has scrupulously followed all legal and procedural requirements for rulemaking under the Administrative Procedure Act, and by increasing the use of rulemaking, it has been the most inclusive and transparent Board in history—in history. This process has given all sides abundant opportunity to provide input to the NLRB. There was opportunity for written comments, written responses to other comments, and even a public hearing.

I would like to point out again that there is no requirement in the Administrative Procedure Act to facilitate a dissent. Even though there isn't, the NLRB's traditional practice has given Member Hayes an opportunity to dissent. He was given that chance. But these practices do not allow him to filibuster or run out the clock to thwart the actions of his colleagues.

The Board filed a notice of proposed rulemaking on June 22, 2011, provided 60 days for filing public comments, and received over 65,000 comments, of which, I might note, all but around 200 were form letters. There were 65,000 comments, and all but around 200 were form letters. But still there were 200 comments, ensuring a wide range of views and stakeholder input. The Board arranged an opportunity for staff from Member Hayes's office to brief congressional staff on his dissent from the notice of proposed rulemaking, and, although not required to do so, the Board also provided an opportunity for oral public comments at a hearing conducted on July 18 and 19, 2011, in which over 60 labor and management lawyers, public interest groups, employer and labor organizations, workers, and other related constituents participated. The Board provided an additional 14 days following the 60-day comment period in which to file written reply comments. Again, this is not required by the APA—the Administrative Procedure Act—or any other law. Then the NLRB held a public vote on a final rule on November 30 and published the final rule in late December. So quite frankly, under the Administrative Procedure Act, which all other agencies follow, the NLRB bent over backward to be transparent and to allow dissent.

I have heard it said that Member Hayes was not allowed enough time. Well, he had his first dissent. But from June 22 until November, Mr. Hayes had all that time to file a dissent if he wanted to—to write a dissent. I mean, is that not enough time to write a dissent? It seems to me that is more than enough time. But that was not done. So I just want to make it clear that I think Mr. Hayes was given more than enough time to write his dissent if he wanted to. He did write one dissent over the proposed rules, but he had the additional opportunity from June 22 until November. Again, the APA, under rulemaking, doesn't entitle him to dissent, but the Board allowed him to

have a dissent if he wanted to. They had access to public comments on the proposed rules. They were given summaries and copies of specific comments the other members found informative. His office had months to incorporate those comments and write a second dissent but chose not to. That was his own choice. That was his own choice. He was not prevented from doing so. That was his own choice.

There are a lot of little items like that which I think are kind of being misinterpreted, but here is the essence of it, right here. Here is the essence of what this is all about. Stripped of all the falderal and all of this and all of that and which Board member was for card check and who wasn't and on and on and on, this is what it is about, right here, this statement. This is Martin Jay Levitt, who was an anti-union consultant who wrote a book called ''Confessions of a Union Buster,'' published in 1993. ''Confessions of a Union Buster.'' Here is what he said:

> Challenge everything . . . then take every challenge to a full hearing . . . then prolong each hearing . . . appeal every unfavorable decision . . . if you make the union fight drag on long enough, workers lose faith, lose interest, lose hope.

That is what it is about. It is about denying people their right under the National Labor Relations Act to fairly and expeditiously have a vote on whether to form a union. This is not new. This has been going on since the 1940s and 1950s, since Taft-Hartley. There have been forces at work in this country since the adoption of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935 to break unions. They do not want to give workers a right to have a voice in collective bargaining. They will go to extreme limits to deny union members their rights. They will do everything they can to try to break up unions. Taft-Hartley was the first of that, and we have had several things since that time.

Our job is to try to make it a level playing field—as level as possible, anyway—and to give workers a right that is not just a right in name only or in words but a real, factual right to form a union and have the election without challenging everything, taking every challenge to a full hearing, prolonging each hearing, appealing every unfavorable decision. As I quoted earlier, if you make the union fight drag on long enough, workers lose faith, lose interest, and lose hope. And I might add, if you drag it on long enough, it gives the employer every opportunity to intimidate workers so they won't join a union or maybe fire people who were active in the union organization drive—to find some reason why they should be fired, anyway. That is what this is about.

What the NLRB has finally done, through an open process, through a rulemaking process, through perhaps one of the most open and transparent processes in the history of the NLRB, is to say: Let's have a system whereby certification votes can be held within a reasonable amount of time. There was no time limit put in there. There is no 7 or 10 days. That is what Mr. Hayes said in his dissent. He just plucked that out of thin air. But that is not in the ruling. That is not in the ruling at all. Most people who have looked at it have said: Well, it may shorten it to 20 to 30 days, somewhere in there. It seems to me that is fair enough. That is fair enough.

But that is really what this is all about, and I hope Senators, when they vote, will recognize that what the Board has done is to take the unfair process we have had for so long and made it more fair for everyone.

I will point out one last time that the procedures the NLRB has come up with, which are under fire right now from the other side, apply to certification votes as well as to decertification votes. If a company wants to decertify a union, then the union can't drag that out days and months at a time. They can't drag that out for decertification either. So it seems to me that on both sides—certification and decertification—we have a level playing field, and neither side can drag it out interminably to try to frustrate the real desires and wishes of the workers.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield 8 minutes to the Senator from South Dakota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to commend the Senator from Wyoming for his great work on the subject.

As Americans know firsthand, we continue to struggle with an economy that is not performing well or meeting the needs of workers. The unemployment rate remains at about 8 percent, as has been the case for the last 28 months. Much of this can be attributed to a lack of certainty on the part of employers.

One need look no further than the regulatory policies being pushed by this administration to understand why job creators are not creating jobs. Back on December 22 of 2011, the technically independent National Labor Relations Board published the final rule on representation-case procedures, better known as the ''ambush elections'' rule. This new rule could allow a union to organize an election in as little as 10 days. This new rule is the most drastic and sweeping modification to the union election process in more than 60 years.

According to the National Labor Relations Board, the median time in which an election is held is 38 days, and 92 percent of all elections occur within 56 days. In fiscal year 2011 the NLRB reports that 71.4 percent of unions won their elections, which is up 3½ percent from fiscal year 2010. It is hard for one to claim that union elections are being held up unnecessarily with these sorts of track records.

The changes put forth by the NLRB will radically change the process of union organizations and will limit an employer's ability to respond to union claims before an election, thereby stifling debate and ambushing an employer and employees. Employers use the time after an election petition has been received to ensure compliance with the National Labor Relations Act, to consult with human resource professionals, and to inform—to inform—their employees about the benefits and shortcomings of unionizing. It is nearly impossible for a small business owner to navigate the regulations of the National Labor Relations Act without the assistance of outside counsel, which will be hard to find in 10 days or less.

On April 21, 1959, then-Senator John F. Kennedy stated, and I quote:

> The 30-day waiting period is an additional safeguard against rushing employees into an election where they are unfamiliar with the issues.

It appears that rushing elections is exactly what the NLRB and big labor are hoping for. After all, unions win 87 percent of elections held 11 to 15 days after an election request is made. The rate falls to 58 percent when the vote take place after 36 to 40 days.

On a decision as important as whether to form a union, workers should have the opportunity to hear from both sides, free from any pressure one way or the other, an opportunity that the NLRB's recent decision would take away.

In addition to ambushing employers with union elections, the NLRB has now decided to recognize micro-unions. The NLRB ruled that so long as a union's petitioned-for unit consists of an identifiable group of employees, the NLRB will presume it is appropriate.

What does this mean for America's small businesses? This means that at your local grocery store there could be a cashiers union, a produce union, a bakers union, the list goes on and on. Micro-unions, coupled with ambush elections, can cause one small business to deal with several bargaining units in the workplace and little time to no time to raise concerns against such actions.

The Supreme Court has expressly stated:

> An employer's free speech rights to communicate his views to his employees is firmly established and cannot be infringed by a union or the NLRB.

The recent actions of the NLRB have all but silenced any freedom of speech once enjoyed by employers. For the State of South Dakota, increased unionization will mean higher costs for the health care industry, driving up health costs for hospitals and consumers. It will also mean higher costs for hotels, tourism, small businesses, and other service industries. The Federal Government should not be acting to slow or hinder job growth in our current economy but should instead be looking for ways to foster job growth.

In addition to radically changing the way in which union elections are organized, the NLRB promulgated a rule requiring most private sector employers to post a notice informing employees of their rights under the National Labor Relations Act. I believe this is yet another example of Federal overreach by this administration that benefits their special interest allies at the expense of American businesses that are currently struggling to create jobs, which is why I introduced the Employer Free Speech Act last year.

If enacted, this legislation would prohibit the NLRB from requiring employers to post a notice about how to establish a union. I am happy to report that on April 17, 2012, the DC Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with me and has stopped the NLRB from enforcing this unnecessary and burdensome rule.

This administration is making a habit of using regulatory policies to strengthen unions and harm the economy. In these difficult times, the last thing government should be doing is putting roadblocks in front of American businesses as they attempt to do their part to turn our economy around and to create jobs.

In the 74 years of the NLRB's existence prior to 2009, the Board had promulgated just one substantive rule. It is time that the NLRB return to its main function, which is to act as a quasi-judicial agency. These actions by the NLRB further push our government down a dangerous path, one in which decisions no longer lie in the hands of those elected by the people but by unaccountable bureaucrats sitting in Washington disconnected from people.

For these reasons and many others, I am supporting S.J. Res. 36, and I want to encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand with American employees and employers and to vote to stop the NLRB from moving forward with what is a misguided and deeply flawed ambush election rule.

I congratulate the Senator from Wyoming for getting this matter on the Senate floor and giving us an opportunity to debate it. This is yet another example of an administration that seems to be bent upon creating more excessive overreaching regulations, making it more difficult and more expensive for American small businesses to create jobs and to get the economy growing again. I hope my colleagues will join me in voting to stop this from happening.

NLRB RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL

• Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, I am in support of S.J. Res. 36 and thank the Senator from Wyoming for introducing it.

I worry that the recent direction of the National Labor Relations Board is killing American jobs, not creating them. This resolution concerns a new rule regarding ambush or quickie union elections. But this action is just the latest in a number of other anti-job creation activities at the NLRB.

The case last year against the Boeing Corporation is a perfect example of where the NLRB actions threatened to kill thousands of new U.S. jobs. By threatening to shut down a new plant producing the new 787 Dreamliner in South Carolina, the NLRB's actions would have cost Boeing billions of dollars. This case has made U.S. companies reconsider building new plants at home, costing high-quality American jobs.

I am particularly worried about a proposed rule by the NLRB that would require employers to turn over employee personal contact information to unions, including personal e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers. This is a blatant violation of an individual's privacy. No one should have access to that type of information, unless you want to provide it. As a Congressman, I fought for easy access to opt into the Do Not Call List, so that you will not be disturbed by unwanted telephone calls. This rule would allow unions to have access to that very same information that the overwhelming majority of Americans do not want to be public. The NLRB is completely out of touch with what is important to Americans.

The resolution on the floor of the Senate specifically addresses the new NLRB rule that would shorten the time frame for a union election to as little as 10 days. The new rule is set to go into effect on April 30. These ambush elections rush workers into making quick decisions, which are often uninformed ones, on an issue that directly affects their every day life in the workplace. Forcing workers to make this quick decision runs against the heart of our democratic system, based on the principles of fairness and justice.

Quickie elections will be particularly harmful to small businesses. Small businesses are the engine of our economy and our greatest job creators. Small business owners have a range of responsibilities and fewer resources than larger corporations. They will struggle to respond to the new, accelerated timeframe for elections. Their compliance costs will almost certainly rise; taking money that could have been put into enhancing their business, growing the economy, and creating jobs.

The NLRB continues to find ways to prevent job growth and inhibit our economy instead of enhancing it. This new rule on ambush elections is no different. I thank the Senator from Wyoming, my ranking member on the HELP Committee, for this resolution and I urge its passage.•

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, today I would like to discuss my strong opposition to the resolution before us, the resolution disapproving of the National Labor Relations Board's final rule governing election procedures. This rule seeks to modernize and streamline a process that is currently costly, inefficient, and promotes unnecessary delay.

Let's be clear about what the rule does and does not actually do. This rule does not fundamentally change how workers are permitted to organize. This rule does not prevent employers from talking to their workers about unionization. This rule is not the Employee Free Choice Act by fiat. This rule does not require that an election take place in a set number of days. These are all of the claims that have been levied against this rule, and, factually, none of them are true.

The rule's modifications are purely procedural. Here is one example. Under the current rules, companies often spend weeks litigating the eligibility of a handful of workers even though the election is ultimately decided by 50 or 100 votes. Those disputed votes couldn't have determined the outcome of the election—the only consequence was delay. So under the new rules, disputes about small numbers of voter eligibility can be decided after the election. The workers in question can cast provisional ballots, just as they do in political elections.

These exact circumstances played out in Minnesota. On April 8, 2008, office clerical workers in Virginia, MN, filed a petition for a union election. But because the parties litigated the status of a single employee, the unit was not certified until June 10th of that year—64 days after the petition was filed. Under the new rule, the issue concerning that single employee could have been resolved after the election, and the election would have been conducted with less delay and uncertainty.

These rules don't favor either unions or companies. They favor efficiency and modernization. They are narrowly tailored—targeting only those elections that face the longest delays. A vast majority of election schedules are agreed to by the parties—90 percent. This rule would only affect the other 10 percent. These rules favor better use of resources. These are the types of government reforms that we should be promoting—cutting down on bureaucracy and redtape.

Unnecessary delays hurt workers seeking to exercise their rights in the workplace—whether they are seeking to certify or decertify a union. These rules simply give workers a chance to vote yes or no.

Working families in Minnesota and across this country are still struggling. The middle class—has been ailing for decades. Without a strong middle class folks who can afford to buy a home and a car and send their kids to college—our country's economic future is tenuous. Protecting the ability of working people to have a voice—to vote yes or no—will bring more middle-class jobs with good wages and benefits that can drive our recovery forward.

The NLRB's rules are modest and reasonable. They uphold the principles of democracy and fairness that have shaped our Nation's workplace laws. I urge my colleagues to vote against this resolution.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the Enzi resolution. If enacted, this resolution would prohibit the National Labor Relations Board, NLRB, from implementing commonsense, straightforward changes to the union representation process that will ensure union elections are conducted in a more fair and efficient manner.

The new rules, which will go into effect on April 30, will make it easier and less burdensome for workers and employers to navigate the union election process.

Workers and employers will now be able to electronically file election petitions and other documents. Timely information essential to both sides being able to fully engage in the election process will be shared more quickly. Timeframes for parties to resolve issues before and after elections will be standardized. Duplicative appeals processes that cause unnecessary delays will be eliminated. Both sides will be required to identify points of disagreement and provide evidence at the outset of the election process, helping to eliminate unnecessary litigation.

The modest reforms proposed by the NLRB do not mandate timetables for elections to occur, as some of my colleagues will allege; rather, the new rules simply eliminate existing barriers that get in the way of providing employees and employers with access to an open and fair election process. As Catholic Healthcare West, which employs most of its 31,000 workers in my State of California, wrote during the public comment period: ''[the] reforms proposed by the NLRB are not pro-union or pro-business, they are pro-modernization.''

I urge my colleagues to support modernization and oppose the Enzi resolution.

NLRB ELECTION RULES

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, we find ourselves debating yet another effort in the campaign against working men and women in this country. Over and over again in this body, and in State legislatures across the country, some have sought to undermine the ability of their constituents—dedicated teachers, electricians, assembly-line workers, and civil servants, just to name a few—to come together to bargain for fair wages and benefits. The resolution of disapproval before us is just another attempt to weaken unionized labor in this country, and I will not support it.

The representation process we are debating, which is overseen and administered by the National Labor Relations Board—NLRB—is used when a group of workers want to hold a union representation vote or when an employer wants to hold a similar vote to decertify a union.

Now let me be clear. What we are considering is a resolution that would effectively nullify a number of worthwhile rule changes intended to streamline and modernize the process for administering a union representation election. And, if adopted, it would essentially bar the NLRB from promulgating any similar rules in the future.

These changes will help cut down on needless delays that can occur at preelection hearings, eliminate the arbitrary minimum 25 day waiting period following a decision to hold an election, and will clarify the election appeals process. And, the new rules will allow for the use of modern technologies, including email and other forms of digital communication.

The NLRB proposed these amendments last summer, allowed for ample time to consider public comments, and finalized the changes this past December. These are reasonable updates meant to accommodate modern forms of communication and discourage delay tactics that can unfairly stall a representation vote for months on end. The finalized rules will help ensure that the unionization process is fair and timely for employees, employers, and unions. And despite what some of my colleagues have stated, the rules are not encouraging an ''ambush.'' They are encouraging an election. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this disapproval resolution.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, over the past 2 days my Republican colleagues have raised several arguments about what the NLRB rule will do. I now want to respond to their points and to clarify once again: this is a modest rule that simplifies preelection litigation in the small number of cases where the parties don't reach agreement and must resort to litigation.

First, my colleagues across the aisle have pointed out that unions have recently won about 71 percent of elections, and so, they argue, the current system is completely fair to unions. This is an incredibly deceptive statistic. Unions have filed far fewer petitions in recent years—down from over 4,100 in 2001 to just over 2,000 in 2011. And in almost a third of cases where petitions are filed, the petition is withdrawn before an election. In other words, the process of getting to an election can be so slow, and employer anti-union attacks so potent, that unions are discouraged from going through the entire election process. For the most part, only in the rare cases where support is truly overwhelming or the employer does not oppose the union do unions win.

In a related vein, Republicans have argued that elections are currently held promptly—on average, between 30 and 40 days after a petition is filed—and therefore no change in the rule is needed. But this argument misses the point of the rule. Currently, in the 10 percent of cases that are litigated, it takes around 124 days to get to an election. It takes around 198 days when parties exhaust their appeal rights. This rule addresses those situations where employers engage in excessive—and often frivolous—litigation to slow down the process. Without question, in those cases, it takes far too long and these new NLRB procedures are a desperately needed fix to shorten that time period for the 10 percent of cases that are litigated.

I have also heard the argument that if employers engage in misconduct that interferes with workers' choice during a long election campaign, the NLRB can rerun the election. But the time it takes to get to a second election only compounds the frustration and loss of hope workers suffer when their opportunity to make a choice is delayed for too long. Many unions won't bother to seek a second election, even if there was employer misconduct, if workers are too discouraged.

One of the major improvements in this bill—deferring challenges to voter eligibility until after the election when they are small in number—has also been mischaracterized. Opponents of the rule claim that workers will be confused about who is in the bargaining unit with them. The reality is, challenged voters will be deferred only when they are small in number relative to the size of the bargaining unit. So there will be little or no confusion about the exact individuals in the unit. Moreover, workers will know full well the essential identity of the group they are a part of; individual employees may come and go over time as workers retire or find new jobs, but the identity of the unit is what remains constant. The unit identity is what workers need to know to be able to make an informed choice about whether to vote for a union.

I hear a lot from the other side how this rule will dramatically shorten the time to an election and how it will lead to so-called ambush elections. There is no basis for this prediction. Opponents of the rule can't even agree among themselves how much time the rule will shave off an election. Senator ENZI suggested that this rule will lead to an election in 10 days; Senator BARRASSO suggested it will almost halve the current median time of 38 days. An attorney from the management-side labor law firm Jackson Lewis told the Wall Street Journal that he thinks the time would be between 19 and 23 days. The vice president of the National Association of Manufacturers predicted a hearing 20 to 25 days after the petition is filed.

The reason there are so many different numbers floating around is because the rule simply does not say anything about a timeframe for elections. Certainly it is true that in the 10 percent of cases that are litigated—where the process is abused and delays are rampant—the rule likely will shorten the time period by instituting more efficient procedures. But as to the 90 percent of cases where there is voluntary agreement, the NLRB will continue to work with parties as it always has to arrive at a reasonable election date.

In connection with their undue speculation about timing of elections, supporters of this resolution have also argued that employers will not have enough time to communicate with workers under the rule. Because the rule does not actually address timing of an election in the great majority of cases, this is pure speculation as well. Moreover, it is well-known that election campaigns begin long before a petition is filed. If employers wish to mount an anti-union campaign, they will almost certainly do so when they learn a drive is happening. They will not wait until a petition is filed.

Similarly, my colleagues have argued that workers will only hear the union's side of the story under this rule. I must point out that it is employers who continue to have the right to hold ''captive audience'' meetings. They can hold meetings on work time where they can require workers' attendance, and they can browbeat workers about why they think unions are bad. Unions have no such access to a workplace. The playing field for communicating with workers is currently dramatically skewed in favor of employers. It will remain skewed in favor of employers after this rule goes into effect. All this rule does is to put some limits on those employers who would drag out elections to better exploit their communications advantage.

My colleagues on the other side argue that small businesses will have to confront election issues and familiarize themselves with the law in a very short timeframe. As I have said repeatedly, there is no reason to expect an election will occur any more quickly in the great majority of cases. Employers would have ample time to review the law. What the new rules do is to put small businesses on the same footing with large employers that can afford excessive, all-out litigation of preelection issues. The process is simplified so that all employers have to deal with straightforward and presumably cheaper procedures that give them all a fair and equal chance to address preelection issues.

My colleagues have argued that this rule creates an uncertain business climate. In fact, the rule does just the opposite. It creates a very predictable process because it applies uniform procedures designed to cut down on pointless litigation.

My Republican colleagues also suggest that this rule will cause more litigation because unions will have less incentive to reach voluntary agreements. But, in fact, unions will continue to have every incentive to have an agreement on election issues. Hearings still take time and resources even though they are now more streamlined than before. Unions would not want to undergo the expense, uncertainty, and delay of a hearing even though the process will be much improved under this rule. I am confident the great majority of cases will continue to be resolved by voluntary agreement.

Let me stress that this rule treats both sides the same way—the rule applies to elections to decertify a union as well as elections to certify one. Although it has been pointed out that there are certain times, such as the first year after a certification vote, when workers are not permitted to petition to decertify a union, the NLRB does provide adequate, defined time periods when workers are permitted to file a decertification petition. Workers' right to file such a petition during those time periods is well-established, and workers who don't want a union have a clear method to vote the union out.

Finally, it has been pointed out that the NLRB recently lost a court battle over its rule requiring a notice posting. But the reality is, the NLRB won this court battle in one district court and lost in another. One court upheld the core of the rule—that the NLRB can require a posting of workers' right to form a union. The DC Circuit Court of Appeals has now blocked the rule to avoid confusion over who has to implement the rule and who doesn't. That court likely won't issue a decision resolving this matter until the fall, but it has absolutely no bearing on the legality or legitimacy of the rule we are debating today. Indeed, the furor over notifying employees of their rights is a perfect example of the extremity of Republican opposition to worker rights. My colleagues have all spoken about the importance of workers being informed about the pros and cons of unionization, but they object to a simple poster that explains workers' rights under the law.

To conclude, this rule will cause no real change for the vast majority of businesses that approach the NLRB election process in good faith. It imposes no new requirements at all for parties who come to the process in good faith and negotiate an agreement. The rule simply addresses the small number of employers that abuse the NLRB election process and deliberately cause delay to buy themselves more time to bombard workers with an anti-union message. The rule also makes NLRB preelection litigation more efficient, saving government resources. It is a commonsense reform that deserves our full support. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote down the resolution disapproving of this NLRB rule.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, 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. HARKIN. 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. HARKIN. Mr. President, how much time is remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 5 minutes for the majority and 3 minutes for the minority.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I will, obviously, yield to my good friend, Senator ENZI, for his closing remarks, but I again just want to point out that this ruling by the NLRB is imminently reasonable.

They went through rulemaking, as I have said before, one of the most transparent boards we have ever had in history. Rather than going through the adjudicative process, they went through rulemaking and a comment period. People were allowed to come in, and they even had an oral hearing which is not even required by the Administrative Procedure Act. Mr. Hayes was allowed due time for filing dissents. He chose not to do so for whatever reason. So everything was complied with. In fact, they bent over backwards to even do more than what the Administrative Procedure Act requires under rulemaking. So that is No. 1.

No. 2, the essence of the rule is eminently fair. It applies both to certification and decertification. There is no 10 days. I keep hearing about this 10 days. Mr. Hayes put that in his dissent, but there is nothing in the rule that requires a 10-day election. Nothing.

Lastly, again, what is this all about? I will say it one more time. This is what it is about, this is it: This is Mr. Martin Jay Levitt who wrote a book, ''Confessions of a Union Buster.'' He was a consultant to businesses that didn't want to have unions formed, and here is what he said in his book. Here is the way they should do things if they don't want to have a union:

> [C]hallenge everything . . . then take everything challenged to a full hearing . . . then prolong each hearing . . . appeal every unfavorable decision. If you make the union fight drag on long enough, workers . . . lose faith, lose interest, lose hope.

That is what it is about. It is about establishing a level playing field now so workers do indeed have their full rights—not a paper right but a full viable right to form a union and to have an election within a reasonable period of time.

Mr. President, I yield the floor. If my friend needs some more time, I yield him whatever time I have remaining.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I thank the chairman for the gift of time. There is nothing that is a greater gift than that.

Of course, I would like everyone to vote for my resolution of disapproval. This did not go through a process that was open and transparent. In fact, there was only one person who voted for this who was confirmed by the Senate. There were two people who voted for it. The other one lost, in a bipartisan way, the ability to be on that committee, so he was recess-appointed. So one person confirmed by the Senate is making this rule, and there was also

one person confirmed by the Senate who was against it. So it was a 1-to-1 tie. That would normally defeat anything.

The biggest thing that is being taken away in this, the biggest thing that collapsed the time down to a potential 10 days, the biggest thing is eliminating the preelection hearing. That is when the employees—the employees—get their fairness of finding out exactly who is going to be represented, who is going to be part of their unit, and get any of their questions answered about this organization that is about to receive their dues. It seems like the employees, for fairness, ought to have that right. It also ought to be for the employers to have that right, especially small businesspeople to have the time to get it together so they are not violating any of the National Labor Relations Board's rules that they can easily step into and be in big trouble during one of these elections.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution of disapproval and stop the National Labor Relations Board's ambush election rule. This vote will send a message to the National Labor Relations Board that their job is not to stack the odds in favor of one party or another—under this administration or another—but to fairly resolve disputes and conduct secret ballot elections.

We have heard from several speakers on the other side of the aisle that this debate and vote are a waste of time. Debating the merits of this regulation is not a waste of time for the millions of small businesspeople and millions of employees who are going to be negatively impacted by it. In fact, once it goes into effect next week, I believe all of us will be hearing from unhappy constituents and asked what we did to stop this legislation, and we will be asked. The contention that we should not be able to raise concerns about the National Labor Relations Board's ambush election regulation before it goes into effect sounds a lot like what the National Labor Relations Board is trying to do to small businesses and employees who have questions about a certification election.

This regulation will take away the right to question whether the appropriate employees are in the bargaining unit or whether it includes supervisors and managers who should not be in the union or whether it leaves out a group of employees who should be in the union because they have similar jobs, and if they are excluded, they will lose ground against the newly unionized employees. This regulation takes away the right to present evidence and testimony at a preelection hearing and to file briefs supporting a position.

Because of the Congressional Review Act, we Senators have had the opportunity to present evidence and have debate. That is a privilege the NLRB is taking away from many small employers and employees, and that will lead to some suffering of the employees.

I urge my colleagues to vote for the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 36. Again, it is a congressional privilege and we should take advantage of it. It is a chance to send a message that we want all of our boards to be fair and equal.

I yield back any remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time was yielded back.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2011—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1925.

The Senator from Arizona.

POSTAL REFORM

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I want to discuss one of the amendments that I believe we will be voting on later, and basically what it does is it establishes a BRAC-like process in order to consolidate redundant, underutilized, and costly post offices and mail processing facilities.

We found over the years that Congress was politically unable to close a base or a facility that had to do with the military, so we adopted a process where a commission was appointed, those recommendations to consolidate excess and underutilized military bases were developed, and Congress was given an up-or-down vote. This is sort of based on that precedent.

The bill before us clearly doesn't offer any solutions. According to the Washington Post editorial:

> The 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2011, proposed by Senators Joseph Lieberman and Susan Collins and passed last week by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security Government Affairs, is not a bill to save the U.S. Postal Service. It is a bill to postpone saving the Postal Service.

I agree with the Washington Post. I usually do. The Service's announcement that they lost $5.1 billion in the most recent fiscal year was billed as good news. That is how dire the situation is, the fact that they only lost $5.1 billion.

> The Collins-Lieberman bill, which transfers $7 billion from the Federal Employee Retirement System to the USPS—to be used to offer buyouts to its workers and paying down debts—can stave off collapse for a short time at best.
>
> Nor do the other measures in the bill offer much hope. The bill extends the payment schedule for the Postal Service to prefund its employee retirement benefits from 10 to 40 years. Yes, the funding requirement is onerous, but if the USPS cannot afford to pay for these benefits now, what makes it likely that it will be able to pay later, when mail volume has most likely plummeted further?
>
> The bill also requires two more years of studies to determine whether a switch to five-day delivery would be viable. These studies would be performed by a regulatory body that has already completed a laborious inquiry into the subject, a process that required almost a year.

The Washington Post goes on to say:

> This seems a pointless delay, especially given a majority of Americans support the switch to five-day delivery.

And finally they go on and say:

> There is an alternative—a bill proposed by Rep. Darrell Issa that would create a supervisory body to oversee the Postal Service's finances and, if necessary, negotiate new labor contracts. The bill . . . is not perfect, but offers a serious solution that does not leave taxpayers on the hook.

So we now have legislation before us that makes it harder, if not impossible, for the Postal Service to close post offices and mail processing plants by placing new regulations and limitations on processes for closing or consolidating mail processing facilities, a move in the wrong direction. It puts in place significant and absolutely unprecedented new process steps and procedural hurdles designed to restrict USPS's ability to manage its mail processing network.

Additionally, the requirement to redo completed but not implemented mail processing consolidation studies will ultimately prevent any consolidations from occurring this calendar year.

What we have to realize in the context of this legislation is that we now have a dramatic shift, technologically speaking, as to how Americans communicate with each other. That is what this is all about. We now have the ability to communicate with each other without sitting down with pen and paper, just as we had the ability to transfer information and knowledge by means of the railroad rather than the Pony Express.

We now have facilities that are way oversized and unnecessary, and we are facing a fiscal crisis. According to the Postal Service:

> The current mail processing network has a capacity of over 250 billion pieces of mail per year when mail volume is now 160 billion pieces of mail.

So now we have overcapacity that is nearly double what is actually going to be the work the Postal Service does, and all trends indicate down. More and more Americans now acquire the ability to communicate by text message, Twitter, and many other means of communications. So to somehow get mired into while we cannot close this post office, we have to keep this one open, we have to do this—we have to realize it in the context that a large portion of the U.S. Postal Service's business is conducted by sending what we call ''junk mail'' rather than the vital ways of communicating that it was able to carry out for so many years.

In addition, the Postal Service has a massive retail network of more than 32,000 post offices, branches, and stations that has remained largely unchanged despite declining mail volume and population shifts. The Postal Service has more full-time retail facilities in the United States of America than Starbucks, McDonald's, UPS, and FedEx combined. And according to the Government Accountability Office, approximately 80 percent of these retail facilities do not generate sufficient

revenue to cover their costs. That is what this debate is all about. I hope my colleagues understand that we are looking at basically a dying part of America's economy because of technological advances, and in this legislation we are basically not recognizing that problem.

When 80 percent of their facilities don't generate sufficient revenue to cover their costs, then any business in the world—in the United States of America—would right-size that business to accommodate for changed situations. This bill does not do that. It continues to put up political roadblocks that prevent tough but essential closings and consolidations.

I grieve for the individuals who took care of the horses when the Pony Express went out of business. I grieve for the bridle and saddle and buggymakers when the automobile came in. But this is a technological change which is good for America in the long run because we can communicate with each other instantaneously. So we have a Postal Service—and thank God for all they did all those years, in fact, to the point where they were even mentioned in our Constitution. But it is now time to accommodate to the realities of the 21st century, and the taxpayers cannot continue to pick up the tab of billions and billions of dollars. Again, last year it lost only $5.1 billion, which they suggested was good news.

All this bill does is place significant and absolutely unprecedented and new process steps and procedural hurdles designed to restrict USPS's ability manage its mail processing network. Additionally, the requirement to redo completed but not implemented mail consolidation studies will ultimately prevent any consolidations from occurring this year.

So what do we need to do? We obviously need a BRAC. We need a group to come together to look at this whole situation, find out where efficiencies need to be made—as any business in America does—and come up with proposals, because Congress does have a special obligation, and have the Congress vote up or down. This bill will continue the failing business model of the Postal Service by locking in mail service standards for 3 years which are nearly identical to those that have been in place for a number of years.

The clear intent of this provision is to prevent many of the mail processing plant closures that the Postal Service itself has proposed as part of its restructuring plan. It also prohibits the Postal Service from moving to 5-day mail delivery for at least 2 years with significant hurdles that must be cleared before approval, even though the Postmaster General has been coming to Congress since 2009 and asking for this flexibility.

One of the largest single steps available to restore USPS's financial solvency would save the Postal Service at least $2 billion annually. If you told Americans that we would save the taxpayers' money—because they are on the hook for $2 billion a year—if you went from 6-day to 5-day mail delivery, I guarantee you that the overwhelming majority of Americans do support a 5-day delivery schedule rather than 6-day delivery schedule.

This, of course, kicks the can down the road. The bill also has at least five budget points of order against it about which the ranking member of the Budget Committee came to the floor yesterday and spoke.

So the BRAC-like amendment is essential, in my view, to moving this process forward. I don't know how many more billions of dollars of taxpayers' money is going to have to be spent to adjust to the 21st century. There is no business, no company, no private business in America that when faced with these kinds of losses wouldn't restructure. And they would restructure quickly because they would have an obligation to the owners and the stockholders. We are the stockholders. We are the ones who should be acting as quickly as possible to bring this fiscal calamity under control.

The GAO, the Government Accountability Office, states:

> The proposed Commission on Postal Reorganization could broaden the current focus on individual facility closures—which are often contentious, time consuming, and inefficient—to a broader network-wide restructuring, similar to the BRAC approach. In other restructuring efforts where this approach has been used, expert panels successfully informed and permitted difficult restructuring decisions, helping to provide consensus on intractable decisions. As previously noted, the 2003 Report of the President's Commission on the USPS also recommended such an approach relating to the consolidation and rationalization of USPS's mail processing and distribution infrastructure.

We pay a lot of attention to the Government Accountability Office around here and this is something the Government Accountability Office recommends as well.

In addition:

> [GAO] reviewed numerous comments from members of Congress, affected communities, and employee organizations that have expressed opposition to closing facilities. Such concerns are particularly heightened for postal facilities identified for closure that may consolidate functions to another state causing political leaders to oppose and potentially prevent such consolidations.

We should listen to the Government Accountability Office, take politics out of this delicate process, and move forward with their recommendations.

Our proposal would be composed of five members appointed by the President, with input from the House and Senate and the Comptroller General, with no more than three members being of the same political party.

The Postal Service, in consultation with the Postal Regulatory Commission, will be required to submit a plan to the BRAC-like Commission on closures and consolidations, which will include a list of closures and consolidations, a proposed schedule, estimated annual cost savings, criteria and process used to develop the plan, methodology and assumptions used to derive the estimates and any changes to processing, transportation, delivery or other postal operations anticipated as a result of the proposed closures and consolidations.

The Commission will be required to publish in the Federal Register the definition of ''excess mail processing capacity'' with a period of public comment.

After receiving the plans, the BRAC-like Commission will be required to hold at least five public hearings.

Finally, the Commission will be required to vote on the recommendations, with the concurrence of at least four of the members, and submit the recommendations to Congress. Any recommendation will be the subject of a congressional vote of approval or disapproval.

The amendment recognizes the fact that the current business model for the Postal Service is no longer viable. If we continue to act in an irresponsible way by putting up political roadblocks, the American taxpayer will be the one who ultimately suffers in the form of higher postage prices and bailouts. We should make hard choices now so future generations of Americans will have a viable Postal Service.

I ask unanimous consent the Washington Post editorial, ''A Failure to Deliver Solutions to Postal Service's problems,'' 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, Nov. 18, 2011]

A FAILURE TO DELIVER SOLUTIONS TO POSTAL SERVICE'S PROBLEMS

The 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2011, proposed by Sens. Joseph I. Lieberman (I–Conn.) and Susan Collins (R–Maine) and passed last week by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, is not a bill to save the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

It is a bill to postpone saving the Postal Service.

The service's announcement that it lost $5.1 billion in the most recent fiscal year was billed as good news, which suggests how dire its situation is. The only reason the loss was not greater is that Congress postponed USPS's payment of $5.5 billion to prefund retiree health benefits. According to the Government Accountability Office, even $50 billion would not be enough to repay all of the Postal Service's debt and address current and future operating deficits that are caused by its inability to cut costs quickly enough to match declining mail volume and revenue.

The Collins-Lieberman bill, which transfers $7 billion from the Federal Employee Retirement System to the USPS—to be used for offering buyouts to its workers and paying down debts—can stave off collapse for a short time at best.

Nor do the other measures in the bill offer much hope. The bill extends the payment schedule for the Postal Service to prefund its employee retirement benefits from 10 to 40 years. Yes, the funding requirement is onerous, but if the USPS cannot afford to pay for these benefits now, what makes it likely that it will be able to pay later, when mail volumes most likely will have plummeted further?

The bill also requires two more years of studies to determine whether a switch to five-day delivery would be viable. These studies would be performed by a regulatory body that has already completed a laborious inquiry into the subject, a process that required almost a year. This seems a pointless delay, especially given that a majority of Americans support the switch to five-day delivery.

We are sympathetic to Congress's wish to avoid killing jobs. And the bill does include provisions we have supported—such as requiring arbitrators to take the Postal Service's financial situation into account during collective bargaining and demanding a plan for providing mail services at retail outlets.

But this plan hits the snooze button on many of the postal service's underlying problems. Eighty percent of the USPS's budget goes toward its workforce; many of its workers are protected by no-layoff clauses. Seven billion dollars' worth of buyouts may help to shrink the workforce, but this so-called overpayment will come from taxpayers' pockets, and it is a hefty price to pay for further delay.

There is an alternative—a bill proposed by Rep. Darrell Issa (R–Calif.) that would create a supervisory body to oversee the Postal Service's finances and, if necessary, negotiate new labor contracts. The bill, which just emerged from committee, is not perfect, but it offers a serious solution that does not leave taxpayers on the hook.

Mr. MCCAIN. I don't know what the ultimate result of the votes in the Senate will be. I do know that if it passes, it will be strongly opposed in the other body, the House of Representatives. If it is passed and signed into law, we will be back on the floor within 2 years addressing this issue again because this is not a solution. This isn't even a mandate. It is a proposal that will do business as usual and an abject failure to recognize there are technological changes that make certain practices obsolete, and that is what this is all about. Is it painful? Yes. Is it difficult? Yes. But the overall taxpayer obviously wants us to act in a fiscally responsible manner.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, knowing we are scheduled to go out at 12:50, I ask unanimous consent to stay in session for no longer than 10 minutes more, so we will break at 1 p.m., for Senator COLLINS and I to respond to Senator MCCAIN—hopefully, sooner than that.

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

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I thank the Chair, particularly since the Chair will be occupied by the distinguished Senator from Montana between now and then.

I wish to respond very briefly to the statement of my friend from Arizona, with a couple big points. The first is that Senator MCCAIN has declared the Postal Service of the United States dead much too prematurely. He compares it to the Pony Express. Of course, electronic mail and other changes have occurred but, today, every day, the Postal Service delivers 563 million pieces of mail—every day. There are businesses and individuals all over our country who depend on the mail. The estimate is there are approximately 8 million jobs in our country, most of them, of course—almost all of them—in the private sector, that depend in one way or another on the functioning of the U.S. Postal Service.

It is not fair and it is not realistic to speak as if the Postal Service is dead and gone and it is time to essentially bury it with the McCain substitute. I cannot resist saying that Senator COLLINS and I come not to bury the U.S. Postal Service; we come to change it but to keep it alive and well forever because it is that important to our country.

Secondly, Senator MCCAIN speaks as if the substitute legislation, S. 1789, that we are proposing—bipartisan legislation—does nothing; that it is a status quo piece of legislation; it is not even a bandaid on the problem. We all know, because we have talked about it incessantly since we went on this bill, that the Postal Service is in financial difficulty. Incidentally, I wish to say there is not a dime of taxpayer money in the Postal Service. Ever since the Postal Service reforms occurred, it has been totally supported by ratepayers, basically by people who buy the services of the Postal Service, with two small exceptions which are small—one to pay for overseas ballots for members of the military so they can vote and another special program to facilitate the use of the mail by blind Americans. But it has a problem: $13 billion lost over the last 2 years.

This proposal of ours—Senator COLLINS and I, Senator CARPER and Senator SCOTT BROWN—is not a status quo proposal. It makes significant changes. There are going to be about 100,000 fewer people working for the Postal Service as a result of this bill being passed. There will be mail processing facilities that close. There will be post offices that will be closed and/or consolidated. There will be new sources of revenue for the Postal Service. The bottom line: The U.S. Postal Service itself estimates that our legislation, if enacted as it is now, as it is phased in over the next 3 to 4 years, by 2016, will save the Postal Service $19 billion a year. This isn't a bandaid. This is a real reform, a real transformation of the Postal Service to keep it alive—$19 billion.

Let me put it another way. This is a bipartisan proposal. We have worked on it very hard to keep it bipartisan. We think it can pass the Senate and it can ultimately be enacted. If Senator MCCAIN's substitute were to pass the Senate, nobody thinks it is going to get enacted into law. It would not. Certainly, the President of the United States would not sign it, and that will mean nothing will be done. What will be the effect of that? The effect will be that the post office will go further and further into debt and deficit. Also, the Postmaster General will be faced with a choice of either enormous debts and deficits or taking steps that will make the situation worse—which our bill, through a reasonable process, is trying to avoid—which is a kind of shock therapy whose effect will be, as the McCain substitute would be, to actually drop the revenues of the post office and accelerate its downward spiral.

I think the two numbers to think about—the ones that come from the Postal Service itself—are these: By 2016, if we do nothing, the Postal Service will run somewhere between a $20 billion and $21 billion annual deficit. If we pass this bill and it is enacted into law, that deficit will be down to around $1 billion—a little more—and heading toward balance in the years that follow.

So I urge my colleagues to vote against the McCain substitute and the BRAC amendment. The BRAC-like Commission amendment I think is not necessary. It is not necessary for us in Congress to give up and give in. We have a good resolution to the problem. Incidentally, if we get this enacted, I think we will send a message to the American people that we can face a tough problem that exists in a public service, deal with it in a reasonable way, and ask people to sacrifice but keep a venerable and critically important American institution alive and well.

I thank the Chair and I yield the floor for my distinguished ranking member.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am only going to speak very briefly. I wish to shine a spotlight on a provision of Senator MCCAIN's substitute that has not yet been discussed that actually raises constitutional issues.

All of us believe the labor force of the Postal Service is too large and unfortunately will have to be reduced, and we do that through a system of buyouts and retirement incentives through a compassionate means very similar to the way a large corporation would handle the downsizing of its employees. But Senator MCCAIN's alternative takes a very different approach. It would have this new control board that would be created to impose on the Postal Service an obligation to renegotiate existing contracts to get rid of the no-layoff provision.

I will say I was very surprised when the Postmaster General signed the kinds of contracts he did this spring. The fact is Senator MCCAIN's amendment—section 304 of which amends section 1206 of existing law—requires existing contracts to be renegotiated. That creates constitutional questions. The potential constitutional issue derives from the contracts clause of article I, which prohibits States from passing laws impairing the obligation of contracts. Of course, this provision does not apply to the Federal Government. The Congressional Research Service has explained in a memorandum to me on this topic in July of 2011 that the due process clause of the

fifth amendment has been held to provide some measure of protection against the Federal Government impairing its own contracts. I ask unanimous consent that the CRS memorandum I just referred to be printed in the RECORD.

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

CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE,
Washington, DC, July 7, 2011.

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Attention: Lisa Nieman.

From: Thomas J. Nicola, Legislative Attorney, 7–5004.

Subject: Congressional Authority to Alter Postal Service Employee-Management Relations, Including Collective Bargaining Agreements.

This memorandum responds to your inquiry regarding the authority of Congress to alter Postal Service employee-management relations, including collective bargaining agreements. The employee-management authority that Congress has granted to the United States Postal Service in the Postal Service Reorganization Act of 1970, P.L. 91–375, is broader than authority that it has granted to most federal entities. Congress enacted the 1970 Act, codified in title 39 of the United States Code, to enable the U.S. Postal Service to operate more like a business than a government agency. Before this statute became law, postal services were operated by the Post Office Department, a cabinet level government agency.

The Act established the Postal Service as an independent establishment in the executive branch of the United States Government. While Congress applied to the Postal Service some statutes including those relating to veterans' preference and retirement that apply to federal agencies, it provided in 39 U.S.C. section 1209(a) that, ''Employee-management relations shall, to the extent not inconsistent with the provisions of this title [title 39 of the U.S. Code], be subject to the provisions of subchapter II of chapter 7 of title 29[,]'' i.e., the National Labor Relations Act, which governs private sector employee-management relations. By contrast, provisions relating to those relations for federal agencies are codified in chapter 71 of title 5 of the United States Code.

In section 1005 of title 39, Congress identified subjects of Postal Service collective bargaining—compensation, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. This scope of subjects differs from the scope for federal agencies identified in chapter 71 of title 5, which is limited to ''conditions of employment.''

Addressing the transition from the Post Office Department to the businesslike U.S. Postal Service, Congress in 39 U.S.C. section 1005(f), as amended, stated, in relevant part, that:

No variation, addition, or substitution with respect to fringe benefits shall result in a program of fringe benefits which on the whole is less favorable to the officers and employees in effect on the effective date of this section [enacted on August 12, 1970], and as to officers and employees/or whom there is a collective-bargaining representative, no such variation, addition, or substitution shall be made except by agreement between the collective bargaining representative and the Postal Service.'' (Emphasis supplied.)

In section 1207 of title 39, Congress provided procedures for terminating or modifying collective bargaining agreements. It stated that a party wishing to terminate or modify an agreement must serve timely written notice on the other party. If parties cannot agree on a resolution or adopt a procedure for a binding resolution of a dispute, the Director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service must appoint a mediator. This section also provided authority to establish an arbitration board under certain circumstances and said that board decisions are conclusive and binding on the parties.

A collective bargaining agreement is a contract between the Postal Service and a recognized bargaining unit. Can Congress affect a collective bargaining agreement through legislative action? The power of Congress over employee-management relations at the Postal Service, including these agreements, may be divided into prospective authority versus authority over existing agreements. Congress has authority to modify the scope of bargaining prospectively. In the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970, Congress granted the Postal Service authority to bargain over compensation, benefits (such as health insurance and life insurance, for example), and other conditions of employment, but it could amend that statute to limit the scope of bargaining subjects in the future. It could, for example, provide that health insurance no longer will be the subject of collective bargaining after collective bargaining agreements that address that subject expire.

A more difficult question is whether Congress could modify agreement terms that the Postal Service and recognized bargaining representatives have bargained collectively and included in collective bargaining agreements before they expire. Article I, section 10, clause 1 of the United States Constitution, the Contract Clause, provides that laws impairing the obligation of contracts shall not be passed, but this prohibition applies to the states, not to the federal government. Nevertheless, the jurisprudence under this clause may help inform an inquiry regarding the power of Congress to modify terms of collective bargaining agreements while they are in effect.

In United States Trust Co. v. New Jersey, the Supreme Court said that, ''Although the Contract Clause appears literally to proscribe 'any' impairment, this Court has observed that 'the prohibition is not an absolute one and is not to be read with literal exactness like a mathematical formula.'''' It added that:

The Contract Clause is not an absolute bar to subsequent modification of a state's own financial obligations. As with laws impairing the obligation of private contracts, an impairment [of those obligations] may be reasonable and necessary to serve an important public purpose. In applying this standard, however, complete [judicial] deference to a legislative assessment of reasonableness and necessity is not appropriate because the state's self interest is at stake. A governmental entity can always find a use for extra money, especially when taxes do not have to be raised. If a state could reduce its financial obligations whenever it wanted to spend the money for what it regarded as an important public purpose, the Contract Clause would provide no protection at all.

Based on the United States Trust Co. case, courts subsequently developed a three-part test when assessing the constitutionality of state action challenged as an impairment of contracts—(1) whether the state action in fact impairs a contractual obligation; (2) whether the impairment is substantial; and (3) whether the impairment nevertheless is reasonable and necessary to serve a public purpose.

Although the Contract Clause does not apply to the federal government, the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment has been held to provide some measure of protection against the federal government impairing its own contracts, but the limitations imposed on federal economic legislation by the latter clause have been held to be ''less searching'' than those involving the state legislation under the Contract Clause. In two Depression-era cases, however, the Supreme Court held that some statutes which impaired obligations to pay purchasers of federally issued war risk insurance and bondholders that Congress had enacted as economy measures exceeded constitutional limits.

If a court should be influenced by the reasoning expressed in these cases, it may strike down as a Due Process Clause violation a statute it finds to impair a term of a Postal Service collective bargaining agreement before that agreement expires. If a court should wish to avoid deciding a case involving whether such a statute violates the Due Process Clause, a constitutional ground, it may uphold the statute, but require the United States to pay damages for breaching a term of the agreement. Alternatively, because the limitations on federal impairment of contracts have been held to be ''less searching'' than those that apply to state impairments under the Contract Clause of the Constitution, which are permitted if found to be ''reasonable and necessary,'' a court may uphold a statute that impairs a term of a current Postal Service collective bargaining agreement and not assess damages against the United States.

Ms. COLLINS. There is also a Supreme Court case, Lynch v. The United States, which makes clear that the due process clause prohibits the Federal Government from annulling its contracts and the United States is as much bound by its contracts as are private individuals.

In the landmark case of U.S. v. Winstar decided in 1996, the Supreme Court cited Lynch for the proposition that the Federal Government ''has some capacity to make agreements binding future Congresses by creating vested rights,'' even though the Contract Clause does not directly apply.

Obviously, one Congress cannot bind another, and no Federal agency can bargain away the right of Congress to legislate in the name of the people. But no one would ever sign a contract with an instrumentality of the Federal Government if that contract could be rewritten by Congress at will.

Recognizing this, the courts have distinguished between acts which affect contracts in general, where the Federal Government is exercising its sovereign powers, and acts directly altering the obligations of contracts to which the Federal Government is itself a party.

The Winstar case I mentioned before illustrates this distinction. Winstar was brought by a financially healthy Savings & Loan institution that was asked by Federal regulators to take over failing thrifts during the S&L crisis of the 1980s. After Winstar entered into a contract with the Federal Savings & Loan Insurance Corporation stipulating that it could count the ''goodwill'' of the thrifts it took over to offset the liabilities it was assuming, Congress changed the underlying

law. Based on that change, the regulators reneged, declared Winstar ''inadequately capitalized,'' and seized its assets.

In that case, the Supreme Court held that even though Congress had the right to change the law in general, the Federal Government could still be liable for breach of contract it had entered into with Winstar, and for damages.

I am concerned that if the Postal Service reopens and renegotiates its collective bargaining agreements to comply with the McCain amendment, courts could find the Postal Service in breach of those agreements, and force it to pay damages.

At a minimum, it strikes me that Senator MCCAIN'S language could tie up the Postal Service in litigation for years, which would defeat our efforts to reduce the workforce costs faced by the Postal Service.

Bottom line: I am very concerned that if the Postal Service is forced by the McCain substitute to reopen and renegotiate current collective bargaining agreements, the courts would find the Postal Service in breach of those agreements and force it to pay damages and also that it would be found to be unconstitutional. The approach we have taken does not raise those constitutional concerns. It does not have Congress stepping in to abrogate contracts, which is a very serious and potentially unconstitutional step for us to take.

Finally, I would say I agree with everything my chairman has said. Senator MCCAIN's amendment does not address the true problems of the Postal Service. Instead, it assumes that the Postal Service is obsolete, that they cannot be saved, and that we should just preside over its demise. I reject that approach.

Thank you, Mr. President.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:01 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m., and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. WEBB).

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NLRB RELATING TO REPRESENTATION ELECTION PROCEDURES—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 36.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are going to have a bunch of votes today, and we are going to have to do them quickly. I say this to Democrats; I say it to Republicans: We are going to have—after this first vote, I ask unanimous consent that we have 10-minute votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is the order.

Mr. REID. And we are going to enforce that. So if people are not here, they are going to miss a vote. Unless there is a situation where we have a close vote, then we will extend it a little bit because that is what the tradition has been. So I repeat, everybody be here or you are going to miss a vote if you are not here at the end of the time.

Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on this matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 54, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 68 Leg.]

YEAS—45

Alexander	DeMint	McCain
Ayotte	Enzi	McConnell
Barrasso	Graham	Moran
Blunt	Grassley	Paul
Boozman	Hatch	Portman
Brown (MA)	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hoeven	Roberts
Chambliss	Hutchison	Rubio
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Snowe
Collins	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Corker	Kyl	Toomey
Cornyn	Lee	Vitter
Crapo	Lugar	Wicker

NAYS—54

Akaka	Hagan	Murray
Baucus	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Begich	Inouye	Nelson (FL)
Bennet	Johnson (SD)	Pryor
Bingaman	Kerry	Reed
Blumenthal	Klobuchar	Reid
Boxer	Kohl	Rockefeller
Brown (OH)	Landrieu	Sanders
Cantwell	Lautenberg	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Shaheen
Carper	Levin	Stabenow
Casey	Lieberman	Tester
Conrad	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Webb
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Kirk

The motion was rejected.

21ST CENTURY POSTAL SERVICE ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the pending business.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1789) to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

Pending:

Reid (for Lieberman) modified amendment No. 2000, in the nature of a substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I appreciate the good work of our colleagues on this legislation. Unfortunately, the legislation spends $34 billion, all of which would be borrowed, all of which adds to the debt of the United States and is contrary to the Budget Control Act limitations that were passed just last August. It is really a grievous problem, not one that can be avoided lightly.

Just last August we agreed to certain debt limits—the amount of debt we would incur and add to the U.S. Treasury. It was a fought-over agreement, but we reached it and we stood by it. I believe we have a moral obligation to not mislead the people who elected us when we said we intend to stand by the limits on increasing debt. This bill increases debt above that limit. The Congressional Budget Office scores it as adding $34 billion in debt to the United States.

Chairman CONRAD has certified that a budget point of order is legitimately placed against it. I would expect we would have a motion to waive the budget point of order. I would expect there might be a motion to say, well, we do not agree with CBO or that somehow this is so important we need to add to the debt anyway. But, colleagues, if we mean what we say, if at this time in history we begin to at least stay within the limits we agreed and we don't do that, then I think we will lose further credibility with the American people.

I respect the work of my colleagues on the bill, but I think we are setting a great precedent. It is a matter of importance for our own integrity and the fiscal stability of America. I believe it is important that we adhere to that limit.

The spending measure, amendment No. 2000 to S. 1789, the 21st Century Postal Service Act, would violate Senate pay-go rules and increase the deficit; therefore, I raise a point of order against this measure pursuant to section 201(a) of S. Con. Res. 21, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of the act and budget resolutions for purposes of the pending amendment for reasons that we described in the debate we had here on the floor yesterday. The U.S. Postal Service says this bill will, in fact, save $19 billion a year.

I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the vote on this motion to

waive be placed at the end of the list of amendments that are in order to vote on now.

Mr. SESSIONS. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. If I may, if we are going to vote now—and Senator COLLINS and I spoke to this at great length yesterday. The CBO score my friend from Alabama cites is a real misreading of the effect of this legislation. It is a kind of form of accounting over the reality of budgeting. The bottom line is that the U.S. Postal Service itself says that if this bill—the substitute to S. 1789—is adopted—and it would be phased in over 3 years—the Postal Service will save $19 billion annually. To me, that is what this is all about—no deficit, a saving.

I ask my colleagues to support the motion to waive the point of the order.

I would yield to my ranking member.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the score for the substitute is incredibly misleading. As the Postal Service has told us, this bill would save the Postal Service $19 billion, and that would return it to profitability. The problem is the unique status of the Postal Service in that it is off-budget for operations but on-budget for workers' benefits accounts. This is true despite the fact that these accounts the Postal Service pays into are not funded with tax dollars.

The postal employees are contributing. The Postal Service, from its revenue, is contributing.

For the retirement accounts, we are not talking about tax dollars from the Postal Service. These are contributions from the postal employees and by the Postal Service from its revenues. But because of the unified budget, it is considered to be an on-budget status for these benefit accounts—most likely because they are shared with other Federal agencies that are using tax dollars.

I urge my colleagues to vote for the motions to waive. If they do not and this bill falls, it will spell the end of the Postal Service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, very briefly, I join my colleague in saying that if this point of order by our friend from Alabama is sustained and this bipartisan bill therefore is not able to be brought up, the effect will be that the Postal Service will continue to run ever-greater losses to a point where they, in fact, will have to turn to the Treasury, which they are not doing now, to bail them out. This is a responsible answer to a problem and a bipartisan one.

I urge my colleagues to vote to support the motion to waive the Senator's point of order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I hope my colleagues listened to what Senator COLLINS said with respect to the way this has been scored. It is a very important point. As much as anybody in this Chamber, I am interested in reducing the budget deficit. I want Senators to keep in mind these three points: One, for a number of years, the Postal Service has overpaid its obligation into the Federal Employees Retirement System—$12 billion to $13 billion in overpayment. They are owed that money. They should be given that money. They are going to use it to help 100,000 postal employees who are eligible to retire to retire. They will use that money to pay down their debt—$13 billion—and almost wipe it out. They will use it for that purpose. CBO scores that as something that makes the budget deficit bigger. If they overpaid the money into the Federal Employees Retirement System, they ought to get it back. They should get people who are eligible to retire and want to retire to retire. They should use it to pay down a $12 billion line of credit to the Federal Government.

The second point I wish to make is the one offered by Senator LIEBERMAN. If we do nothing and we get to May 15, the Postal Service is free to close post offices across the country—3,700 of them. They are free to close as many as 200 to 300 mail processing centers. There is a smarter way to do this, which is in this legislation.

Lastly, we are going to have the opportunity today and tomorrow for all of us to better understand the amendments that have been agreed to and offered by both sides, what has been agreed to and put into the managers' amendment, which we will, frankly, have a lot more confidence in.

The Postal Service tells us today they are going to lose $23 million. They lost that much yesterday. They are going to lose that much again tomorrow, the next day, and the next day. They owe $13 billion to the Treasury. What I think is more important to keep in mind is when we finish our work today and tomorrow, and we look to see what that means for the Postal Service, in terms of their operation on a daily basis and where will they be in terms of paying their obligation by 2016, we need to keep our eye on the ball. I urge Senators not to vote for this. Give us a day for the body to work its will and then make your decision. If we have not made any more progress, vote against it.

Lastly, several of our colleagues have well-intentioned amendments that will literally drive up the cost and make it harder for the Postal Service to move toward a balanced situation, to a sovereign situation. I urge Senators—and some of these amendments are offered by people we love and it is hard to say no to them. But in this case, maybe the greater devotion should be to the taxpayers of our country, to the people who work for the Postal Service, and to their customers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I appreciate the Senators who have expressed their disagreement on the budget point of order. Even if one disagrees over the $11 billion, there is $23 billion in additional spending that will be borrowed over the decade, according to CBO. With regard to the $11 billion, that money will be borrowed and given to the Postal Service. It increases the debt of the United States.

Therefore, CBO scores it as a violation of the debt limit in the pay-go provision. It clearly is. So we are not saying we should not have a postal bill. Let's vote, stand firm with the debt limit agreement we had in August. Let's ask our good committee to produce a bill that is paid for in some fashion. We spend $3,700 billion in the United States. We need to find about $3 billion a year to fund their proposal to solve this problem. That is what we should do. We are at a defining moment. There is no middle ground. I say vote to sustain the point of order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, for a very long time, in a bipartisan way, a number of people have come together to save the U.S. Postal Service. Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator CARPER and Senator COLLINS and Senator BROWN have worked very hard, as have many others, because if the Postal Service goes under or is dismembered, we are talking about 8 million jobs in this country—small businesspeople who are dependent on a strong Postal Service.

The Postmaster General originally was talking about shutting down 3,700 rural post offices in every State in this country. I hope Members understand that a post office in a rural town is more than just a post office. If that post office disappears, in many cases that town disappears. The Postmaster General was talking about specifically slowing mail delivery standards, shutting down half the processing plants in this country—over a short period of time, eliminating 200,000 jobs in this country.

I hope we can proceed, have a serious debate on these issues, hear all the amendments, but at the end of the day, I hope we will go forward and save the U.S. Postal Service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I too thank the chairman and ranking member of the committee and Senator CARPER for bringing something to the floor that is bipartisan. I applaud that and the fact that the committee process is working.

But the fact is we did set a top line number when the country almost shut down last August 2. On one of the very first pieces of legislation we passed, the highway bill, we violated that budget cap. It wasn't by much, but we violated it. Now we have a bill that violates it by $11 billion.

What I say is that if the Postal Service is that important to this Nation, if

it has bipartisan support, should we not figure out a way to deal with the Postal Service in such a way to stay within the budget constraints we have laid out? It seems to me things that are very popular in this Nation are the very things we ought to make choices about and eliminate something else if we want to spend money in this way. I would like to see a bill that is far more reformed, and I think if we did that, the tab on this would not be $11 billion above the budget.

What I say to everybody here is, please, our credibility is going out the window. Sixty-four of us signed a letter to the leader and to the President asking that we deal in a real way with deficit reduction. The country almost shut down. The world watched. We established a top line number, and here we are, for something we like, violating that. We are losing all credibility with our citizens—the citizens we represent. We are losing credibility in the world.

To me, if we are going to produce a bipartisan piece of legislation, it ought to be one that lives within the bipartisan agreement we had regarding what we are going to spend in this Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I add my strong voice to support the position of Senators LIEBERMAN, COLLINS, CARPER, and BROWN, who has also been a great leader in this bipartisan effort to save the Postal Service and put it on a more sound financial footing, not at the expense of taxpayers generally but the users of the Postal Service.

This is about rural towns in America. This is about small businesses everywhere that rely on the Postal Service to get basic business done. Don't vote wrong today. Give the Postal Service a chance to save itself. That is what we are doing. We are giving rural communities a chance to fight and to be part of a growing economy. We are giving small businesses the opportunity to stay in business. Don't cut them off today. Let this debate go forward because we are trying to do the right thing and go in the fiscally responsible direction.

I see my colleague from Massachusetts who has been a very able leader in our effort.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for speaking on this important issue. This is something that is ratepayer costs, not taxpayer dollars. It is something we have worked on for a couple months. All of a sudden we are here at the end now and everybody is saying, by the way, we cannot do it.

Bottom line: If we don't do this and pass it, we will not have a Postal Service. This is something we recognize—there is a new business environment that the Postal Service operates under but one focused on sustainment. If we don't give them the tools to do that, we are going to be losing the Postal Service.

There is a misconception somehow out there that there is a bailout going on. These are dollars that are ratepayer dollars, not taxpayer dollars. Our bill doesn't prevent the Postal Service from making changes or streamlining operations, but it ensures that it rolls out changes in a deliberate and responsible manner. It is fair to the employees and gives postal customers the ability to continue to use the service, provide short-term relief without taxpayer funding—that FERS overpayment of between $7 billion and $10 billion, part of which we can use to help reduce the workforce without even blinking. It is a no-brainer.

It provides long-term relief as well, curbside delivery, administrative efficiencies and other reforms, retiree health care restructuring. It focuses its primary attention on the primary costs, the controversial Postal Service closures, going from 5-day service to 6-day service. Listen, both sides are highly charged on these issues. Had they been involved in the conversations of upward of 400 hours between staff and Members working on these things, we could have worked through those, instead of waiting until, once again, the end hour to get on these issues.

Once again, I am with Senators LIEBERMAN, CARPER, and COLLINS, obviously, in my effort to continue to move this bill forward so we can have a good conversation about how to reestablish that trust between the American ratepayer, taxpayer, and the Postal Service. We need to do this.

It is very important for us to do it. We need to move on and focus on the things that matter. This matters. I want to make sure I can send my mom a card. I want to make sure we can continue to keep our people employed. I want to make sure we have an institution that will be viable into the next century. I hope we will move forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, very briefly, I thank Senator BROWN from Massachusetts for his statement and his work on the bill.

This point of order puts the whole bill in jeopardy. Right at the beginning of the debate and the vote, it forces Members to decide whether they want to deal with this crisis of the Postal Service. I think it tests Congress again—in this case the Senate. Are we going to face a real problem in one of the iconic areas of American public service, the Postal Service, which cannot continue to do business as it is now—and this bill will force it to change in ways that are significant but will still keep it alive—or are we going to turn away from the problem, which would be the effect of sustaining this point of order. It would also cut off the debate.

We have 39 amendments pending. This bill may change as the debate goes on. The final vote on passage of the bill will require 60 votes. So don't cut it off now.

Let's have this debate and prove to the American people that we can take on a problem and, on a bipartisan basis, fix it. I urge my colleagues to vote for the motion to waive the point of order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I think there is merit in the discussion about whether we vote now or vote later. The important thing is that we vote on this budget point of order. It is not as if the entire process of trying to fix the post office is going to collapse if we take this vote and it succeeds. All we are asking is that we find a way to pay for it. This Senate agreed last August to the Budget Control Act; that we were not going to exceed these limits, and that we would find, if there was something essential that needed to be done—if that is the case to be made here—we would at least find a way to stay within what we agreed to do. This is the second time now, I believe—maybe more—that we have violated that agreement. So what do we go home and tell our people? Well, this was so important—to save some post offices—that we had to violate an agreement which was agreed to by a strong majority here to save the country from default.

There are priorities. It is impossible for me to understand why we can't, in this government that spends over $3.7 trillion, find a way to scare up $34 billion over a 10-year period of time to cover the cost this bill is going to lay on us. So I would urge, whether we vote now or vote later on the point of order made by the Senator from Alabama, that we consider this. We have a recess week coming up. Staff can get together and dig out $34 billion in cost savings we can apply to this so we don't have to worry about going home and telling people we didn't keep our word, that we lied to them last August.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I sit on this committee. I voted on the last postal reform bill. I am not unfamiliar with the issues. I think the question before us is why can't we do both? Why can't we fix the post office and pay for it at the same time, if in fact the CBO says that? Our answer, always, up here is that we want to fix the post office but we don't want to make the hard choices on how to do that.

My colleagues have done great work. There are parts of this bill I don't agree with. I am trying to amend parts of it. But I think we should try to move forward with it. The ultimate question is, will we do what is best for the post office and the American people. And doing what is best for the post office and the American people is any cost where the CBO says we will violate the budget agreement we should pay for.

I will offer right now to come up with easy ways to pay for this bill just through the duplication reports we have gotten from the Government Accountability Office. We all know it is out there. We all know there is $100 billion, at least, that we could come up with by consolidating programs or mandating they be consolidated. So it is not a matter of finding the money, it is a matter of whether we have the will.

We are on a collision course with history that says we are not going to succeed if we don't get our budgets in order. So I agree it is hard to stomach sometimes what the CBO tells us. It doesn't fit with common sense. When it works for us, we use it. When it works against us, we say it doesn't matter. This is a budget point of order, and I think we can do both, and I think we ought to do both.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, let me repeat for my colleagues one more time: There are no taxpayer dollars authorized by this bill or appropriated by this bill. The score is caused by the unique status the postal service accounts have within the unified budget. The operational accounts are off budget. The employee health benefits and retiree accounts are on budget because those accounts are also used by Federal agencies.

Let me again quote from the inspector general who explains the system very well. He says the source of the Federal employee retirement funding comes from two streams of revenue. First, the U.S. Postal Service contributes 11.9 percent of the employees' salaries to the fund and the employees contribute .8 percent. The postal service's contribution comes from revenue paid for postage, and this money comes from ratepayers. The employee contribution is made in exchange for a defined benefit.

There are no tax dollars authorized or appropriated by this bill. It is a quirk of the way the unified budget works. And that is why we should vote to waive this point of order. We are not talking about taxpayer dollars here.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to waive the point of order raised by the Senator from Alabama.

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 69 Leg.]

YEAS—62

Akaka	Gillibrand	Murray
Baucus	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Begich	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bennet	Hoeven	Pryor
Bingaman	Inouye	Reed
Blumenthal	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Blunt	Kerry	Roberts
Boxer	Klobuchar	Rockefeller
Brown (MA)	Kohl	Sanders
Brown (OH)	Landrieu	Schumer
Cantwell	Lautenberg	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Snowe
Carper	Levin	Stabenow
Casey	Lieberman	Tester
Cochran	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Collins	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Conrad	Menendez	Warner
Coons	Merkley	Webb
Durbin	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Moran	Wyden
Franken	Murkowski	

NAYS—37

Alexander	Graham	McConnell
Ayotte	Grassley	Paul
Barrasso	Hatch	Portman
Boozman	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hutchison	Rubio
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Coburn	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Kyl	Vitter
Crapo	Lee	Wicker
DeMint	Lugar	
Enzi	McCain	

NOT VOTING—1

Kirk

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 62, the nays are 37. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I thank my colleagues.

We had kind of an existential vote at the beginning which we didn't expect. It is always good to survive terminal action, and now we can proceed. We have 39 amendments pending. I hope we can proceed expeditiously. I hope some of our colleagues will agree to voice votes. On several of these, Senators COLLINS, CARPER, SCOTT BROWN, and I agreed on and we are prepared to accept them. So I hope our colleagues will allow us to do that by consent. But now we can proceed with the first amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 2056, AS MODIFIED

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 2056 and ask unanimous consent that it be modified with the changes at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Montana [Mr. TESTER] for himself and others, proposes an amendment numbered 2056, as modified.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To modify the process for closing or consolidating post offices and postal facilities)

On page 27, strike lines 24 and 25 and insert the following:

(a) CLOSING OR CONSOLIDATING CERTAIN POSTAL FACILITIES.—Section 404 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding after subsection (e) the following:

On page 35, between lines 16 and 17 insert the following:

(b) COMPLAINTS RELATING TO CLOSING OR CONSOLIDATION OF POSTAL FACILITIES.—Section 3662 of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following:

''(3) SUSPENSION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF DETERMINATION TO CLOSE OR CONSOLIDATE POSTAL FACILITIES.—The Postal Regulatory Commission shall suspend the effectiveness of a determination by the Postal Service to close or consolidate a postal facility until the disposition of any complaint challenging the closing or consolidation on the basis that the closing or consolidation is—

''(A) not in conformance with service standards issued under section 3691, including the service standards required to be maintained under section 201 of the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012; or

''(B) unsupported by evidence on the record that substantial economic savings are likely to be achieved as a result of the closing or consolidation.''; and

(2) in subsection (c), by inserting ''ordering the Postal Service to keep a postal facility open,'' after ''loss-making products,''.

On page 39, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 45, line 2 and insert the following:

(a) CLOSING POST OFFICES.—Section 404(d) of title 39, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(d)(1) The Postal Service, prior to making a determination under subsection (a)(3) of this section as to the necessity for the closing or consolidation of any post office, shall—

''(A) consider whether—

''(i) to close the post office or consolidate the post office and another post office located within a reasonable distance;

''(ii) instead of closing or consolidating the post office—

''(I) to reduce the number of hours a day that the post office operates; or

''(II) to continue operating the post office for the same number of hours a day;

''(iii) to procure a contract providing full, or less than full, retail services in the community served by the post office; or

''(iv) to provide postal services to the community served by the post office through a rural carrier;

''(B) provide postal customers served by the post office an opportunity to participate in a nonbinding survey conducted by mail on a preference for an option described in subparagraph (A); and

''(C) if the Postal Service determines to close or consolidate the post office, provide adequate notice of its intention to close or consolidate such post office at least 60 days prior to the proposed date of such closing or consolidation to persons served by such post office to ensure that such persons will have an opportunity to present their views.

''(2) The Postal Service, in making a determination whether or not to close or consolidate a post office—

''(A) shall consider—

''(i) the effect of such closing or consolidation on the community served by such post office;

''(ii) the effect of such closing or consolidation on employees of the Postal Service employed at such office;

''(iii) whether such closing or consolidation is consistent with—

''(I) the policy of the Government, as stated in section 101(b) of this title, that the Postal Service shall provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where post offices are not self-sustaining; and

''(II) the retail service standards established under section 203 of the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012;

''(iv) the extent to which the community served by the post office lacks access to Internet, broadband and cellular phone service;

''(v) whether substantial economic savings to the Postal Service would result from such closing or consolidation; and

''(vi) such other factors as the Postal Service determines are necessary; and

''(B) may not consider compliance with any provision of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 651 et seq.).

''(3) Any determination of the Postal Service to close or consolidate a post office shall be in writing and shall include the findings of the Postal Service with respect to the considerations required to be made under paragraph (2) of this subsection. Such determination and findings shall be made available to persons served by such post office.

''(4) The Postal Service shall take no action to close or consolidate a post office until 60 days after its written determination is made available to persons served by such post office.

''(5) A determination of the Postal Service to close or consolidate any post office, station, or branch may be appealed by any person served by such office, station, or branch to the Postal Regulatory Commission within 30 days after such determination is made available to such person. The Commission shall review such determination on the basis of the record before the Postal Service in the making of such determination. The Commission shall make a determination based upon such review no later than 120 days after receiving any appeal under this paragraph. The Commission shall set aside any determination, findings, and conclusions found to be—

''(A) arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with the law;

''(B) without observance of procedure required by law;

''(C) inconsistent with the delivery service standards required to be maintained under section 201 of the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012 or not in conformance with the retail service standards established under section 203 of the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012; or

''(D) unsupported by substantial evidence on the record, including that substantial economic savings are likely to be achieved as a result of the closing or consolidation.

The Commission may affirm or reverse the determination of the Postal Service or order that the entire matter be returned for further consideration, but the Commission may not modify the determination of the Postal Service. The determination of the Postal Service shall be suspended until the final disposition of the appeal. The provisions of section 556, section 557, and chapter 7 of title 5 shall not apply to any review carried out by the Commission under this paragraph.

''(6) For purposes of paragraph (5), any appeal received by the Commission shall—

''(A) if sent to the Commission through the mails, be considered to have been received on the date of the Postal Service postmark on the envelope or other cover in which such appeal is mailed; or

''(B) if otherwise lawfully delivered to the Commission, be considered to have been received on the date determined based on any appropriate documentation or other indicia (as determined under regulations of the Commission).

''(7) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the right under section 3662—

''(A) of an interested person to lodge a complaint with the Postal Regulatory Commission under section 3662 concerning nonconformance with service standards, including the retail service standards established under section 203 of the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012; or

''(B) of the Postal Regulatory Commission, if the Commission finds a complaint lodged by an interested person to be justified, to order the Postal Service to take appropriate action to achieve compliance with applicable requirements, including the retail service standards established under section 203 of the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012, or to remedy the effects of any noncompliance.''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 2056, offered by the Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, amendment No. 2056 requires the Postal Service to take into consideration some pretty commonsense things, such as economic savings, before they urge the shutdown of a post office or mail processing center.

It also requires the Postal Service to take into account retail service standards. That means the Postal Service would not be able to leave a community without access to basic postal services when it closes down a post office.

If the Postal Service does not meet these criteria, the Postal Regulatory Commission can review and reject the Postal Service's proposal. This amendment adds much needed teeth to the amendment that Senator MORAN and I offered when this bill was before the committee.

I am joined by a number of cosponsors, but in particular Senator FRANKEN and Senator LEVIN. This is a commonsense amendment that allows a lot of the post offices that are going to be closed to have another set of eyes and have the Postal Regulatory Commission take another look.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I wish to echo the statement of my friend, Senator TESTER, and urge all my colleagues to support our amendment.

The Tester-Franken-Levin amendment gives individuals and communities impacted by closures a voice. It will give Minnesotans real recourse to challenge closure decisions and a fighting chance to keep their local post offices and processing facilities open.

Right now, individuals affected by post office closures can appeal the decision to the Postal Regulatory Commission, but the commission cannot stop closures. Our amendment will give the PRC the authority to reverse post office and processing facility closure decisions.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on amendment No. 2056.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I support Senator TESTER's amendment.

It simply creates safeguards to ensure that the Postal Service, when it closes a post office, does so as the result of a process that is transparent and takes into account the unique needs of communities, particularly small towns and rural areas.

This does not stop the decision-making process at the Postal Service to change the Postal Service. It makes it transparent and fair.

If I may, at this time I ask unanimous consent that if a voice vote is requested and acceptable for any of the amendments relative to the postal reform bill, including this one, that the 60-vote affirmative vote requirement be waived for that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I want to note for the benefit of our colleagues that on the list of 39 amendments, the first amendment was Senator MCCAIN's amendment No. 2001. He did not call it up, which is an expression of his intention not to go forward with it. I thank him for that, and I hope it sets a precedent that other of the sponsors of amendments will feel moved to follow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I too support the amendment offered by Senator TESTER and Senator LEVIN.

It simply makes clear that the Postal Regulatory Commission may review an appeal of a post office closure if it violates either the overnight delivery service standard or the retail service standards that are created by our bill. So I urge support for the amendment.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the bill before us would make some important changes to existing law. There is little doubt that change is necessary; the Postal Service faces an extraordinary financial challenge, and it must make changes to take into account a new reality in which physical mail has in many cases been replaced by electronic communication.

But in making these necessary reforms, we must ensure that all the American people can continue to rely on the United States Postal Service to provide universal service, as it has since our Nation's founding. And we must ensure that in making changes, any reduction in facilities and personnel yields real cost savings to the Postal Service that outweigh the loss in service. One of the things we can do to assure that is to require that there be a real, objective way to test and challenge Postal Service proposals to close facilities. In an effort to meet those goals, I have joined with Senators TESTER and FRANKEN and others to propose an amendment that would

make some important changes to the substitute amendment before us.

Here are some of the provisions of our amendment. Under current law, any interested party can appeal a proposed closure of a community's main post office to the PRC, the Postal Regulatory Commission. The substitute before us extends that opportunity for appeal to branches of a post office. The substitute does not, however, extend that same appeal right to postal processing facilities. While the substitute acknowledges the need for some oversight over the closure of processing facilities, it is important to provide a meaningful chance to appeal a proposed closure of a mail processing facility. Our amendment does that.

The importance of providing a meaningful appeal process was reinforced by a recent experience of mine. In February, I wrote to Postmaster General Donahoe about the decision to close six processing facilities in Michigan. In my letter, I asked four questions: How many jobs would be affected at each facility? Of those, how many would be transferred to other facilities? How far would each transferred worker have to transfer? And what were the projected cost savings or additional costs at each affected facility? It seems to me that information is crucial to making informed decisions about whether to close a facility. But when the Postal Service responded to my letter nearly 8 weeks later, the response did not answer any of these questions satisfactorily. An inability to provide that kind of basic information indicates to me that a fair opportunity to appeal is crucial.

Our amendment also clarifies that during the appeal process for post offices, branches, and processing facilities, the proposed closure shall be suspended—not just that it ''may be'' suspended, as is the case under current law. If the Postal Service can close a post office, branch or processing facility while the closure is under appeal, the appeal would be a sham.

Also, under current law and the substitute before us, the PRC has the authority to affirm a proposed closing or order that the matter be returned to the Postal Service for further consideration. Our amendment would grant the PRC the additional authority to reverse a closure decision.

Our amendment would also require that the Postal Service consider whether a proposed closing or consolidation is consistent with new retail service standards that the bill requires, and whether the proposed action achieves real and substantial cost savings. And our amendment provides that the PRC set aside Postal Service decisions to close post offices and branches that do not achieve substantial economic savings. If our goal is to help save the postal service money, surely it is important that we do not allow actions that degrade service to our communities without actually saving money.

Postal reform is among the most significant issues we will consider this year. It touches every town and village, every person and every business across our Nation. The Postal Service's universal service obligation—the obligation to ensure that all Americans have access to an affordable, efficient postal system in order to communicate with one another—is among the most important obligations any agency or department has. It sets the Postal Service apart from private-sector firms that are under no obligation to serve all markets. The Postal Service's first obligation is not profit. It is service.

Historically, the United States Postal Service has played a vital role in uniting Americans across the vast expanse of this continent, in connecting Americans far from home with their loved ones, in helping businesses reach customers across the Nation and the globe. Establishing a postal service was among the first acts of the Continental Congress, an act that predates even the Declaration of Independence. The need to establish an efficient postal system for the colonies was deemed so important that Benjamin Franklin, one of the most respected leaders not just in America, but the world, was named our first postmaster general.

I have heard from many of my constituents on this issue, as I am sure all of us have. They recognize the need to reform the Postal Service and find efficiencies so that it can continue to serve all Americans. But they also want us to do this the right way—to ensure that any changes we make, in fact, put the Postal Service on a sound financial footing, and that we carefully balance the need for savings with the need to maintain service for all people and in every community across the Nation. I believe our amendment will help us meet those goals, and I urge the bill's managers and all our colleagues to support its adoption.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2056, as modified.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I urge adoption of the amendment and ask for a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Amendment (No. 2056), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

AMENDMENT NO. 2060

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 2060.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. COBURN] for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, and Mr. MCCAIN, proposes an amendment numbered 2060.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide transparency, accountability, and limitations of Government sponsored conferences)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. GOVERNMENT SPONSORED CONFERENCES.

(a) TRAVEL EXPENSES OF FEDERAL AGENCIES RELATING TO CONFERENCES.—

(1) LIMITATIONS AND REPORTS ON TRAVEL EXPENSES TO CONFERENCES.—Chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 5711 the following:

''§ 5712. Limitations and reports on travel expenses to conferences

''(a) In this section, the term—

''(1) 'conference' means a meeting that—

''(A) is held for consultation, education, or discussion;

''(B) is not held entirely at an agency facility;

''(C) involves costs associated with travel and lodging for some participants; and

''(D) is sponsored by 1 or more agencies, 1 or more organizations that are not agencies, or a combination of such agencies or organizations; and

''(2) 'international conference' means a conference attended by representatives of —

''(A) the United States Government; and

''(B) any foreign government, international organization, or foreign nongovernmental organization.

''(b) No agency may pay the travel expenses for more than 50 employees of that agency who are stationed in the United States, for any international conference occurring outside the United States, unless the Secretary of State determines that attendance for such employees is in the national interest.

''(c) At the beginning of each quarter of each fiscal year, each agency shall post on the public Internet website of that agency a report on each conference for which the agency paid travel expenses during the preceding 3 months that includes—

''(1) the itemized expenses paid by the agency, including travel expenses, the cost of scouting for and selecting the location of the conference, and any agency expenditures to otherwise support the conference;

''(2) the primary sponsor of the conference;

''(3) the location of the conference;

''(4) in the case of a conference for which that agency was the primary sponsor, a statement that—

''(A) justifies the location selected;

''(B) demonstrates the cost efficiency of the location; and

''(C) provides a cost benefit analysis of holding a conference rather than conducting a teleconference;

''(5) the date of the conference;

''(6) a brief explanation how the conference advanced the mission of the agency;

''(7) the title of any Federal employee or any individual who is not a Federal employee whose travel expenses or other conference expenses were paid by the agency; and

''(8) the total number of individuals whose travel expenses or other conference expenses were paid by the agency.

''(d) Each report posted on the public Internet website under subsection (c) shall—

''(1) be in a searchable electronic format; and

''(2) remain on that website for at least 5 years after the date of posting.''.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 5711 the following:

''5712. Limitations and reports on travel expenses to conferences.''.

(b) LIMITATIONS ON ANNUAL TRAVEL EXPENSES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of each of fiscal years 2012 through 2016, an agency (as defined under section 5701(1) of title 5, United States Code) may not make, or obligate to make, expenditures for travel expenses, in an aggregate amount greater than 80 percent of the aggregate amount of such expenses for fiscal year 2010.

(2) IDENTIFICATION OF TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Not later than September 1, 2012 and after consultation with the Administrator of General Services and the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall establish guidelines for the determination of what expenses constitute travel expenses for purposes of this subsection. The guidelines shall identify specific expenses, and classes of expenses, that are to be treated as travel expenses.

(c) CONFERENCE TRANSPARENCY AND LIMITATIONS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

(A) the term ''agency'' has the meaning given under section 5701(1) of title 5, United States Code; and

(B) the term ''conference'' has the meaning given under section 5712(a)(1) of that title (as added by subsection (a)).

(2) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF CONFERENCE MATERIALS.—Each agency shall post on the public Internet website of that agency a detailed information on any presentation made by any employee of that agency at a conference, including—

(A) any minutes relating to the presentation;

(B) any speech delivered;

(C) any visual exhibit, including photographs or slides;

(D) any video, digital, or audio recordings of the conference; and

(E) information regarding any financial support or other assistance from a foundation or other non-Federal source used to pay or defray the costs of the conference, which shall include a certification by the head of the agency that there is no conflict of interest resulting from the support received from each such source.

(3) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT EXPENDED ON A CONFERENCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—No agency may expend more than $500,000 to support a single conference.

(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to preclude an agency from receiving financial support or other assistance from a foundation or other non-Federal source to pay or defray the costs of a conference the total cost of which exceeds $500,000.

(4) LIMITATION ON THE ANNUAL NUMBER OF CONFERENCES AN AGENCY MAY SUPPORT.—No agency may expend funds on more than a single conference sponsored or organized by an organization during any fiscal year, unless the agency is the primary sponsor and organizer of the conference.

Mr. COBURN. This is a straightforward amendment on conferences. We all have seen what happened with the GSA conference. This is all about transparency and creating a system where we are actually getting to see what is spent on conferences. There is not one branch of the Federal Government that does not have teleconferencing available and videoconferencing available.

What we do know is from 2000 to 2006, the Federal Government—that is the last time we have records—spent over $2.2 billion on conferences. We know the travel budget is $15 billion a year and a minimum $500 million a year is spent on conferences at a time when we need to spend less, and they have grown remarkably during the Bush administration as well as this administration.

This is just simple good government transparency, where we have put on a Web site what they are doing and why they are doing it. We limit foreign conference travel to 50. We limit the maximum amount to $500,000, unless they can make an exception for that based on cause and reason.

So it is simply a good government program to get some visibility on what we are spending on conferences, and I would ask for a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I strongly support this amendment. I wish to commend the Senator from Oklahoma for offering an amendment that would prohibit the kind of lavish spending on Federal conferences we have seen recently at GSA. So this is an excellent amendment. It will save money, provide more transparency, and put a cap on how much can be spent. I urge adoption of the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I also support the amendment, and I thank Senator COBURN for introducing it. This is disclosure and limitation of spending on conferences. Unfortunately, the excessive and outrageous spending by GSA on the conference in Las Vegas brought the whole area of Federal spending on conferences into the public Klieg lights, and I reached a conclusion that we are spending too much.

This amendment would require the posting online of all agency conference spending. It limits the amount that can be spent on conferences and limits the number of conferences agency employees can attend and it imposes a 20-percent across-the-board cut on agency budgets for this purpose. I hope the amendment passes. I hope the bill passes as amended.

There are a couple parts of that that we have begun to work with Senator COBURN and his staff on which I think will make this a better amendment. But bottom line, this responds to a need, and I support it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator in Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, just briefly, I support this amendment. I am happy Senator COBURN has offered this amendment and it was debated. I hope it is accepted on a voice vote.

Let me say, we brought a bill to the floor that has been brought together by two Republicans and two Democrats. We just had a vote on whether to waive a budget point of order. Give us a chance to air the bill, offer amendments, and look to see what we can agree on in a bipartisan vote. We have an early opportunity to go back and forth on amendments not just for the Democratic amendments but Republican amendments as well.

My hope is at the end of the day we will approve both. Hopefully, we will be able to say we passed a bill with bipartisan support.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired. The question is on agreeing to the Coburn amendment, amendment No. 2060.

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2033

(Purpose: To establish the Commission on Postal Reorganization)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I call up amendment No. 2033.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arizona [Mr. MCCAIN], for himself and Mr. COBURN, proposes an amendment numbered 2033.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The text of the amendment is printed in the RECORD of Wednesday, April 18, 2012 under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, this amendment would establish a commission on postal reorganization, basically a BRAC. It is the same thing we have done in the case of military bases. For many years we were unable to close a single one. This would establish a commission on postal reorganization. They would come out with their findings and recommendations and Congress would vote up or down.

Recently, the Government Accountability Office released a report just this month entitled ''Challenges Related to Restructuring the Postal Service's Retail Network,'' which supports this BRAC-like policy process, and it goes on to say that this Commission could broaden the current focus on individual facility closures, which are often contentious, time consuming, and inefficient to a broader network with wide restructuring similar to the BRAC approach.

This is obviously an admission that we are unable to make these tough decisions ourselves, but it has proven successful in the BRAC process, and I think it will in this case.

I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise to oppose the amendment. This amendment would create a commission similar to the base closure commission to oversee Postal Service decisions regarding which post offices, processing plants, and district offices are to close or consolidate.

In this bill we have constructed what I think is a clear and fair system for making exactly those decisions. The language in the bill is not status quo language. If this bill is enacted, there are post offices that will close or be consolidated as well as mail processing facilities that will close. That simply has to happen, but it will happen according to a system of due process that gives most heed to the fiscal crisis of the Postal Service.

In other words, I think we have a congressional answer to this problem. We don't have to yield it to another BRAC commission.

I urge opposition to the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is expired. The question is on agreeing to the McCain amendment No. 2033.

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The result was announced—yeas 30, nays 69, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 70 Leg.]

YEAS—30

Alexander	Hatch	McConnell
Blunt	Hutchison	Paul
Burr	Inhofe	Portman
Chambliss	Isakson	Risch
Coats	Johanns	Rubio
Coburn	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Cornyn	Kyl	Shelby
Crapo	Lee	Toomey
DeMint	Lugar	Vitter
Graham	McCain	Wicker

NAYS—69

Akaka	Feinstein	Moran
Ayotte	Franken	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Murray
Baucus	Grassley	Nelson (NE)
Begich	Hagan	Nelson (FL)
Bennet	Harkin	Pryor
Bingaman	Heller	Reed
Blumenthal	Hoeven	Reid
Boozman	Inouye	Roberts
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Brown (MA)	Kerry	Sanders
Brown (OH)	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cantwell	Kohl	Shaheen
Cardin	Landrieu	Snowe
Carper	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Cochran	Levin	Thune
Collins	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Conrad	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Coons	McCaskill	Warner
Corker	Menendez	Webb
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Enzi	Mikulski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Kirk

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The Senator from Oregon.

AMENDMENT NO. 2020, AS MODIFIED

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator CANTWELL, other colleagues, and myself, I call up amendment No. 2020 and ask unanimous consent that it be modified with the changes at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendment, as modified.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oregon [Mr. WYDEN], for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN, proposes an amendment numbered 2020.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Postal Service to consider the effect of closing or consolidating a postal facility on the ability of the affected community to vote by mail and to provide for a moratorium on the closing or consolidation of post offices and postal facilities to protect the ability to vote by mail)

On page 28, strike lines 20 through 24 and insert the following:

''(i) conduct an area mail processing study relating to that postal facility that includes—

''(I) a plan to reduce the capacity of the postal facility, but not close the postal facility; and

''(II) consideration of the effect of the closure or consolidation of the postal facility on the ability of individuals served by the postal facility to vote by mail and the ability of the Postal Service to timely deliver ballots by mail in accordance with the deadline to return ballots established under applicable State law;

On page 29, line 13, strike ''and'' and all that follows through ''publish'' on line 14 and insert the following:

''(II) consider the effect of the closure or consolidation of the postal facility on the ability of individuals served by the postal facility to vote by mail and the ability of the Postal Service to timely deliver ballots by mail in accordance with the deadline to return ballots established under applicable State law; and

''(III) publish

On page 30, line 1, after ''the facility'' insert the following: ''or consideration of the effect of the closure or consolidation of the postal facility on the ability of individuals served by the postal facility to vote by mail and the ability of the Postal Service to timely deliver ballots by mail in accordance with the deadline to return ballots established under applicable State law''.

On page 42, line 16, insert ''(A)'' before ''The Postal''.

On page 42, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

''(B) The Postal Service shall take no action to close or consolidate a post office until 60 days after the Postal Service provides written notice of the determination under paragraph (3) to—

''(i) the State board of elections for the State in which the post office is located; and

''(ii) each local board of elections (or equivalent local entity) having jurisdiction of an area served by the post office.

On page 45, strike line 11 and insert the following:

(c) MORATORIUM TO PROTECT THE ABILITY OF VOTERS TO VOTE ABSENTEE OR BY MAIL.—Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this subsection or subsection (d) or (f) of section 404 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by this Act, during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on November 13, 2012, the Postal Service may not close or consolidate a post office or postal facility located in a State that conducts all elections by mail or permits no-excuse absentee voting, except as required for the immediate protection of health and safety.

(d) HISTORIC POST OFFICES.—Section 404(d) of

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided on amendment No. 2020, as modified.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President and colleagues, this amendment is for the more than 25 million Americans—more than 800,000 of them serving in the military—who vote by mail in our system of government, the most open and free system of government in the world. Those millions of Americans may vote absentee, they may vote in what is called no-excuse absentee, or they may vote in an all-mail election, but they deserve this fall to have the assurance from the U.S. Senate that as we reform the Postal Service, the election will not be disrupted.

I hope my colleagues will support this. I think it has been discussed at length on both sides of the aisle. It has always been bipartisan to try to expand the franchise. I hope we can pass this on a voice vote.

I wish to thank both Chairman LIEBERMAN and Senator COLLINS, who had a real challenge handling all of these amendments and who have been very gracious, both of them, as always.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise to support the amendment. I thank Senator WYDEN and those who worked with him on this amendment for, frankly, calling our attention to this important matter and working to ensure that our efforts to salvage the U.S. Postal Service—to change it, to keep it alive—do not come at the expense of our critical efforts to ensure access to the voting booth by mail as well as no-excuse absentee programs that rely heavily on dependable mail service. I support the amendment.

If there is no further debate, I urge that we adopt the amendment by voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2020, as modified.

The amendment (No. 2020), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

AMENDMENT NO. 2058, AS MODIFIED

Mr. COBURN. I ask unanimous consent to call up my amendment No. 2058 and that it be modified with the changes at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the amendment, as modified.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. COBURN] proposes an amendment numbered 2058, as modified.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To improve access to postal services in communities potentially affected by a postal closing or consolidation)

On page 40, strike lines 16 through 18 and insert the following:

''(iv) to provide postal services to the community served by the post office—

''(I) through a rural carrier; or

''(II) by co-locating an employee of the Postal Service at a commercial or government entity;

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 2058, as modified, offered by the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. This is a straightforward amendment. It modifies the new service requirement to encourage colocation in other businesses.

One of the things that is going to happen to the Postal Service where they can't—85 percent of our post offices are losing money. So what we can do is keep service but have it at a different location for a much lower cost. All this amendment does is encourage the Postmaster General to consider that as part of the service standard in meeting that requirement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, this amendment by the Senator from Oklahoma is right in line with the bill. We do encourage the Postal Service to look at colocations—for example, in a local pharmacy or a grocery store. In many small communities, that may well be a viable option, and it may well improve customer access. So I think this is a very good amendment that is in line with other language already in the bill. I urge its adoption by a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I say to my colleagues that this is another good amendment offered by the Senator from Oklahoma. What the Postmaster General has in mind for our communities across America, where there are 33,000 post offices, is to give a number of them an option—a menu, if you will—to see whether it makes sense in those communities to shorten somewhat the length of time the post office is open in a day—maybe to 6 or 4 hours a day—whether to use a colocator in a supermarket maybe or in a convenience store or to in some cases, say, to State and local government operations in those communities: Why don't we put them under the same roof? Why doesn't that make sense?

Frankly, all those ideas may make sense. The idea is not to tell a community which of those options they have to choose but to say: This is the menu. And this is one of the great options that should be on the menu.

I commend the Senator for offering the amendment. I urge a ''yes'' vote on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate on the amendment, the question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

The amendment (No. 2058), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the next amendment on the list, the so-called McCaskill-Merkley amendment, be dropped a few places down because we are working on some compromise language that we hope will lead to a voice vote of acceptance.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2061, AS MODIFIED

Mr. LIEBERMAN. That would mean Senator COBURN's next amendment, which is amendment No. 2061, is now the pending business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. SHAHEEN). The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to modify amendment No. 2061 with the changes at the desk and ask that it be brought up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendment, as modified.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. COBURN] proposes an amendment numbered 2061, as modified.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To achieve long-term cost-savings by allowing the Postmaster General to reduce the postal workforce through mandatory retirements for eligible employees)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. AUTHORITY TO REQUIRE RETIREMENT-ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES OF THE POSTAL SERVICE TO RETIRE.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''retirement-eligible employee''—

(1) means an employee of the Postal Service who meets the age and service requirements to retire on an immediate annuity under section 8336 or 8412 of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) does not include an individual described in section 8336(d) or 8412(g) of title 5, United States Code.

(b) AUTHORITY.—Subject to subsection (c), not earlier than the date that is 2 years after the enactment of this Act, the Postmaster General may issue rules and regulations prohibiting a retirement-eligible employee from performing service as an employee of the Postal Service.

(c) LIMITATION.—The Postmaster General may only issue rules and regulations under subsection (b) if the Postmaster General determines that issuing the rules and regulations would achieve financial savings for the Postal Service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 2061, as modified, offered by the Senator from Oklahoma.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, this is an amendment we have changed somewhat from the original version to address some of the concerns.

What this amendment does is 2 years from now it will give the authority to the Postmaster General to create a retirement requirement for postal employees. There are 175,000 postal employees eligible for retirement right now. Nothing happens for the next 2 years. It gives plenty of time for planning. It gives him the authority to create that principle, which says that when you become retirement age—because they are going to have a continuing need to have fewer and fewer employees—there is the ability to make retirement mandatory. That is all it does. It is for those who are best capable of retiring with full pensions. They have to have complete and full pension capability. It will allow him to do that 2 years from now—not now but 2 years from now—and it only gives him the authority should he want to. So it does not mandate it, it does not require it, and it actually does not take effect for 2 years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, while I think the changes the Senator has made in his amendment do improve it considerably, I am still very concerned about the idea of imposing a mandatory retirement system, and let me tell you why.

First, to me, it smacks of age discrimination in some cases. Second, we could be losing some of our most experienced and best personnel we need to implement the major changes that are authorized by this bill. Third and finally, I find it a little odd that we would want to tell people who are still in their working years and have had a good career and are contributing and are good employees that we do not want them to work anymore. I think the approach in our bill of offering incentives is a better way to go.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, the difference is you are going to pay $25,000 to people to retire. The Postmaster General has already said he needs to have 120,000 fewer employees. That will grow over a period of time. We are setting a precedent with the buyout, one. We are setting a precedent that has never before been done in the Federal Government. No. 2, and probably more important, is the fact that——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time is expired.

Mr. COBURN. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The result was announced—yeas 33, nays 65, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 71 Leg.]

YEAS—33

Alexander	Graham	Murkowski
Barrasso	Hatch	Paul
Blunt	Hutchison	Portman
Burr	Inhofe	Risch
Chambliss	Isakson	Roberts
Coats	Johanns	Sessions
Coburn	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Cochran	Kyl	Thune
Cornyn	Lee	Toomey
Crapo	McCain	Vitter
Enzi	Moran	Wicker

NAYS—65

Akaka	Gillibrand	Mikulski
Ayotte	Grassley	Murray
Baucus	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Begich	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bennet	Heller	Pryor
Bingaman	Hoeven	Reed
Blumenthal	Inouye	Reid
Boozman	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Boxer	Kerry	Rubio
Brown (MA)	Klobuchar	Sanders
Brown (OH)	Kohl	Schumer
Cantwell	Landrieu	Shaheen
Cardin	Lautenberg	Snowe
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Collins	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Conrad	Lugar	Udall (NM)
Coons	Manchin	Warner
Corker	McCaskill	Webb
Durbin	McConnell	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wyden
Franken	Merkley	

NOT VOTING—2

DeMint	Kirk

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The Senator from Connecticut.

AMENDMENT NO. 2031, AS MODIFIED

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, a while back we skipped over the McCaskill-Merkley amendment. We were working on a modification. The modification is ready now. I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to the McCaskill-Merkley amendment No. 2031.

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

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 2031. I ask unanimous consent that it be modified with the changes at the desk.

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

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Missouri [Mrs. MCCASKILL] proposes an amendment numbered 2031, as modified.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit the closing of a rural post office unless certain conditions are met and to establish a moratorium on the closing of rural post offices)

On page 40, line 1, after ''post office'' insert ''and, with respect to a determination to close a post office in a rural area, as defined by the Census Bureau, prior to making the determinations required by paragraph (4)''.

On page 42, line 13, after ''subsection'' insert ''and, with respect to a determination to close a post office located in a rural area, as defined by the Census Bureau, a summary of the determinations required under paragraph (4)''.

On page 42, between lines 15 and 16, insert the following:

''(4) The Postal Service may not make a determination under subsection (a)(3) to close a post office located in a rural area, as defined by the Census Bureau, unless the Postal Service—

''(A)(i) determines that postal customers served by the post office would continue after the closing to receive substantially similar access to essential items, such as prescription medications and time-sensitive communications, that are sent through the mail; or

''(ii) takes action to substantially ameliorate any projected reduction in access to essential items described in clause (i); and

''(B) determines that—

''(i) businesses located in the community served by the post office would not suffer substantial financial loss as a result of the closing;

''(ii) any economic loss to the community served by the post office as a result of the closing does not exceed the cost to the Postal Service of not closing the post office;

''(iii) the area served by the post office has adequate access to wired broadband Internet service, as identified on the National Broadband Map of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration; and

''(iv) there is a road connecting the community to another post office that is not more than 10 miles from the post office proposed to be closed (as measured on roads with year-round access).

On page 42, line 16, strike ''(4)'' and insert ''(5)''.

On page 42, line 20, strike ''(5)'' and insert ''(6)''.

On page 44, line 1, strike ''(6)'' and insert ''(7)''.

On page 44, line 1, strike ''(5)'' and insert ''(6)''.

On page 44, line 12, strike ''(7)'' and insert ''(8)''.

On page 45, strike lines 3 through 10 and insert the following:

(b) PROHIBITION ON CLOSING POST OFFICES.—

(1) MORATORIUM PENDING ESTABLISHMENT OF SERVICE STANDARDS.—Notwithstanding section 404(d) of title 39, United States Code, as amended by this section, during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date on which the Postal Service establishes the service standards under section 203 of this Act, the Postal Service may not close a post office, except as required for the immediate protection of health and safety.

(2) MORATORIUM ON CLOSING RURAL POST OFFICES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this subsection or section 404(d) of title 39, United States Code, during the 12-month period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Postal Service may not close a post office located in a rural area, as defined by the Census Bureau, except as required for the immediate protection of health and safety, or unless there is no significant community opposition to such closure.

(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to limit the authority of the Postal Service to implement, consistent with the procedures under section 404(d)(1)(B) of title 39, United States Code, as amended by this Act, cost-saving measures with respect to the post offices described in subparagraph (A), including, as appropriate, the measures required to be considered under clauses (ii), (iii), and (iv) of section 404(d)(1)(A) of title 39, United States Code, as amended by this Act.

On page 45, line 14, strike ''(8)(A)'' and insert ''(9)(A)''.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. This amendment reflects the efforts of a lot of people to deal with rural post office closings in a way that will be straightforward and fair to rural communities across this country. It is going to prevent any closings for 1 year while the reforms which are embedded in this bill have a chance to begin to work. It then sets some clear standards for potential closures.

I want to thank Senator MORAN who did some great work on this subject in committee. He deserves credit for beginning the process of taking a hard look at rural post offices and how we were dealing with them. I obviously want to thank Senator MERKLEY who has worked on this, Senator TESTER who has worked on it, and Senator SANDERS. But I really want to thank Senator COLLINS and Senator LIEBERMAN for continuing to model to this body what true bipartisanship looks like, and who continually strive for that very elusive and rare but valuable commodity in a democracy, that thing known as compromise. This amendment now represents one of those compromises. I am proud to be a part of it. I think it strikes the right note of protecting rural post offices but also with a realistic eye toward the future and how we are fair to rural communities in a way that is predictable and one that, frankly, shows some accountability for the Postal Service.

I ask that this be taken up by voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, I appreciate the work that has been done on this amendment. I know there is a lot of interest on both sides of the aisle because of the concern about rural post offices. This establishes, again, some standards. It effectively asks the Postal Service before it considers closing a rural post office for 1 year after enactment of this legislation

that it explore every other opportunity to continue to provide service other than closing the post office.

The one clear authority given in the modified amendment is to close a rural post office when there is no significant community opposition, which is to say, when the Postal Service has convinced the people of the community that they have a good alternative to the current post office. So I think we have reasoned together.

I hope this enables our colleagues who may have been thinking of more absolute prohibitions to closing post offices to step back from that. This is a rational, fair approach. I support the modification and the amendment.

I urge that the amendment be adopted by voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2031), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I move to reconsider the vote and ask unanimous consent that the motion be laid upon the table.

The motion to lay upon the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

AMENDMENT NO. 2080, AS MODIFIED

Ms. SNOWE. Madam President, I call up Snowe amendment No. 2080 with a modification at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the modification?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maine [Ms. SNOWE] proposes an amendment numbered 2080, as modified.

Ms. SNOWE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment, was modified, as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Postal Rate Commission to evaluate area mail processing studies)

On page 34, strike lines 16 and 17 and insert the following:

''Act of 2012;

''(B) if a complaint described in subparagraph (A) is lodged relating to the closure or consolidation of a postal facility, upon request by the person lodging the complaint, the Postal Regulatory Commission shall determine whether—

''(i) the area mail processing study relating to the postal facility used an appropriate methodology; and

''(ii) the cost savings identified in the area mail processing study relating to the postal facility are accurate;

''(C) the Postal Regulatory Commission may direct the Postal Service to conduct another area mail processing study or direct the Postal Service to take action as described under subparagraph (D) if the Postal Regulatory Commission determines that—

''(i) the area mail processing study relating to the postal facility used an inappropriate methodology; or

''(ii) the cost savings identified in the area mail processing study relating to the postal facility are inaccurate; and

''(D) if the Postal Regulatory Commission

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 2080 offered by the Senator from Maine.

Ms. SNOWE. Madam President, very briefly, first I want to thank the chair of the committee and my colleague from Maine, Senator COLLINS, for working and assisting me in modifying this amendment.

I thought this amendment was important from the standpoint and based on our experience in Maine with the recent proposal by the Postal Service to close a distributional and processing facility. As my colleague Senator COLLINS will attest as well, we discovered that much of their methodology was indeed faulty in the savings that they had suggested would be achieved by closing this facility.

There were many questions raised with those numbers and reports. As we know, before the U.S. Postal Service can make any determination for closing a facility, they have to prepare and publish an area processing study.

Based on that study, I have recommended that we now have independent verification of the numbers and proposals by the U.S. Postal Service so that we can make sure those numbers are accurate and that we verify the methodology in addition to the savings.

One of the examples I can give from this proposal is one they made for a facility in the State of Maine to eliminate two management positions, for a savings of $799,000. When we questioned the veracity of that number, they backtracked and said it was only $120,000. Incredulously, they have now submitted their final area processing study this year and returned to the higher figure of $800,000 for the two management positions. We know that cannot be accurate. Therefore, given the evidence of these proposals, we need to have independent verification by the Postal Regulatory Commission before any closure can go forward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, first, I congratulate my colleague from Maine for an excellent amendment. As she indicated, the Postal Service made a major miscalculation, a mathematical error, in the study it did on the Hampden processing center in our State. So that Senators know, the amendment would say if a proposed consolidation of a mail processing center is appealed to the Postal Regulatory Commission, the Commission can be asked to review the underlying study's methodology and the estimated savings to make sure it is correct because right now there is no way to challenge a mistake that is made by the Postal Service in conducting these very important studies that are going to decide whether processing centers stay open.

I commend my colleague from Maine for a very well thought out amendment, and I urge its adoption by voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

The amendment (No. 2080) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

AMENDMENT NO. 2043, AS MODIFIED

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, I call up amendment No. 2043 and ask that it be modified with the changes at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Mexico [Mr. UDALL] proposed an amendment numbered 2043, as modified.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To strike the limitations on changes to mail delivery schedule, with an offset)

Strike section 208 and insert the following:

SEC. 208. TRANSFER OF AMOUNTS FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY FUND.

Section 8348(h)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraphs (B) and (C) and inserting the following:

''(B)(i) The Office shall—

''(I) redetermine the Postal surplus or supplemental liability as of the close of each of fiscal years 2007 through 2043; and

''(II) report the results of the redetermination for each such fiscal year, including appropriate supporting analyses and documentation, to the United States Postal Service on or before June 30 of the subsequent fiscal year.

''(ii) If the result of a redetermination under clause (i) is a supplemental liability, the Office shall establish an amortization schedule, including a series of annual installments commencing on September 30 of the subsequent fiscal year, that provides for the liquidation of such liability by September 30, 2043.

''(C)(i) Subject to clause (ii), if the result of a redetermination under subparagraph (B) for any of fiscal years 2013 through 2023 is a surplus, the amount of the surplus shall be transferred to the General Fund of the Treasury.

''(ii) Not more than a total of $8,900,000,000 shall be transferred under clause (i).''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 2043, offered by the Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, this amendment strikes a provision allowing the USPS to move to 5-day service in 2 years. Two years is simply not enough time to see the changes we are making in this bill take effect before we cut this essential service.

My amendment doesn't say we can never move to 5-day service, but it says that 2 years is not enough time for the Postal Service to implement the many cost-saving measures in the bill.

Why eliminate one of the key competitive advantages and hurt rural America before we know the effects of these reforms? It makes no sense.

Why would we make a change that would reduce mail volume by almost 7 percent? Isn't that why we are in this crisis in the first place?

I hope my colleagues will join me in protecting rural jobs and go on record to say clearly that moving to 5-day service should be a last resort.

I reserve my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, I rise to oppose the amendment of my friend from New Mexico. I know there are a lot of people who don't want to lose 6-day delivery. But the greater imperative is not to lose the Postal Service as we know it.

The Postmaster asked for the immediate authority to go from 6 days of delivery to 5. In this bill we have given the Postmaster authority in many different areas to save money. We said, as a result, that we will not give him the authority to go from 6 days of delivery to 5 for 2 years, hoping that within the 2 years he can save enough money not to have to make this change. Frankly, I am skeptical that he can. We wanted to give him 6 days of delivery—that last opportunity.

To pull this procedure out of the bill, with a lot of due process before the move can be made from 6 to 5 days, removes the credibility from the bill and will jeopardize its ultimate adoption.

With a lot of respect and affection for my friend from New Mexico, I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, this amendment would also take $8.9 billion that is supposed to go to pay for retiree health benefits of postal workers and instead redirect those funds to maintain 6-days-a-week delivery of the mail. I hope we always have 6-days-a-week delivery. I think that is an asset. I think we should strive to preserve it. That is why our bill prohibits going to 5-day delivery for 2 years, to wring all the waste out of the system.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, Saturday service is absolutely essential in rural areas.

I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The result was announced—yeas 43, nays 56, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 72 Leg.]

YEAS—43

Baucus	Johnson (SD)	Reed
Begich	Kerry	Reid
Bennet	Klobuchar	Rockefeller
Blumenthal	Kohl	Sanders
Boxer	Lautenberg	Schumer
Brown (OH)	Leahy	Shaheen
Cantwell	Levin	Snowe
Cardin	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	McCaskill	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Udall (CO)
Durbin	Merkley	Udall (NM)
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Harkin	Nelson (NE)	
Inouye	Nelson (FL)	

NAYS—56

Akaka	DeMint	McCain
Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Feinstein	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Murkowski
Bingaman	Grassley	Paul
Blunt	Hagan	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Pryor
Brown (MA)	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hoeven	Roberts
Carper	Hutchison	Rubio
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Coburn	Johanns	Thune
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Collins	Kyl	Vitter
Conrad	Landrieu	Warner
Corker	Lee	Webb
Cornyn	Lieberman	Wicker
Crapo	Lugar	

NOT VOTING—1

Kirk

The amendment (No. 2043), as modified, was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

AMENDMENT NO. 2082, AS MODIFIED

Mr. DURBIN. I call up my amendment No. 2082, and I ask unanimous consent that it be modified with the changes at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN] proposes an amendment numbered 2082, as modified.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit the Postal Service from closing or consolidating, or reducing the workforce of certain postal facilities)

On page 33, strike line 24 and all that follows through page 34, line 6 and insert the following:

''(C) LIMITATIONS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), during the 3-year period beginning on the date of enactment of the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012, the Postal Service may not close or consolidate a postal facility if—

''(I) the closing or consolidation prevents the Postal Service from maintaining service standards as required under section 201 of the 21st Century Postal Service Act of 2012; or

''(II) the Postal Service—

''(aa) did not close or consolidate the postal facility before May 15, 2012; and

''(bb) conducted an area mail processing study with respect to the postal facility after January 1, 2006 that—

''(AA) was terminated; or

''(BB) concluded that no significant cost savings or efficiencies would result from closing or consolidating the postal facility.

''(ii) EXCEPTION.—Clause (i) shall not apply with respect to a postal facility described in clause (i)(II) for which—

''(I) an audit under clause (iii) concludes that the mail volume and operations of the facility have changed since the date of termination or completion of an area mail processing study described in clause (i)(II)(bb) to such an extent that the study is no longer valid; and

''(II) an area mail processing study completed under this subsection concludes that the closing or consolidation or the postal facility is justified, taking into consideration the savings to the Postal Service and the impact of the closing or consolidation on postal customers.

''(iii) AUDIT BY INSPECTOR GENERAL.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Upon the written request of the Postmaster General, the Inspector General shall conduct an audit of the mail volume and operations of a postal facility.

''(II) COMPLETION.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Inspector General receives a request under subclause (I), the Inspector General shall submit to the Postmaster General and the Postal Regulatory Commission a report containing the conclusions of the audit under subclause (I).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 2082, as modified, offered by the Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this was an amendment I originally offered relative to processing facilities that have been subject to efficiency reviews. At the suggestion of the chairman of the committee, Senator LIEBERMAN, as well as ranking members, we have modified the amendment. The sum total of its change would be for those limited facilities which have been found since the year 2006 to be efficient. Before they could be closed, the postal service would have to call on the U.S. Postal Service's inspector general to conduct an audit to find that the previous findings have been terminated and are no longer valid.

That is the only change that was recommended by the committee and the staff, and I have added that modification to the amendment.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I want to salute Senator DURBIN on his thoughtful amendment and thank him for his collegiality in negotiations. We think it helps us. But we have been misled, manipulated, and disregarded in our attempts to get information from the Postal Service. I don't know if the Easton AMP study has been concluded or suspended. I can't get an answer from the Postal Service. And if I can't get an answer, then the little guy on the Eastern Shore can't get an answer. I believe there are other Senators in the same boat who have been disregarded by the Postal Service.

Does my colleague believe his amendment provides protections for mail processing centers where the Postal Service has postponed or suspended their study for a significant period of time—like at the facility in Easton, MD?

Mr. DURBIN. It is a pleasure working with Senator MIKULSKI and I think the Senate can appreciate how hard she works for her constituents. I am sympathetic to hear that the Senator's inquiries to the Postal Service on behalf of seniors, small businesses, and other constituents have gone unanswered.

It is my intent for, and the Postal Service has assured me that, the mail processing facility in Easton, MD, where the Postal Service has issued a formal notification that they are postponing their study for a significant period of time, is covered by my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, I thank my friend from Illinois. He has explained the amendment totally. It is a good amendment. I support its passage, and urge we adopt it by voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

The amendment (No. 2082), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote, and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2034

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. AKAKA. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 2034.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Hawaii [Mr. AKAKA], for himself, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. HARKIN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. FRANKEN, proposes an amendment numbered 2034.

Mr. AKAKA. I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide appropriate workers compensation for Federal employees)

Strike title III and insert the following:

TITLE III—FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ACT

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Federal Workers' Compensation Modernization and Improvement Act''.

SEC. 302. PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS AND ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSES.

(a) DEFINITION OF MEDICAL SERVICES.—Section 8101(3) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''law. Reimbursable'' and inserting ''law (reimbursable''; and

(2) by inserting before the semicolon, the following: '', and medical services may include treatment by a physician assistant or advanced practice nurse, such as a nurse practitioner, within the scope of their practice as defined by State law, consistent with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor)''.

(b) MEDICAL SERVICES AND OTHER BENEFITS.—Section 8103 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a), the following:

''(b) Medical services furnished or prescribed pursuant to subsection (a) may include treatment by a physician assistant or advanced practice nurse, such as a nurse practitioner, within the scope of their practice as defined by State law, consistent with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor.''.

(c) CERTIFICATION OF TRAUMATIC INJURY.—Section 8121(6) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting before the period, the following: ''(except that in a case of a traumatic injury, a physician assistant or advanced practice nurse, such as a nurse practitioner, within the scope of their practice as defined by State law, may also provide certification of such traumatic injury and related disability during the continuation of pay period covered by section 8118, in a manner consistent with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor)''.

SEC. 303. COVERING TERRORISM INJURIES.

Section 8102(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(1) by inserting ''or from an attack by a terrorist or terrorist organization, either known or unknown,'' after ''force or individual,''; and

(2) by striking ''outside'' and all that follows through ''1979)'' and inserting ''outside of the United States''.

SEC. 304. DISFIGUREMENT.

Section 8107(c)(21) of title 5, United States Code—

(1) by striking ''For'' and inserting the following: ''(A) Except as provided under subparagraph (B), for''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), for an injury occurring during the 3-year period prior to the date of enactment of the Federal Workers' Compensation Modernization and Improvement Act for which the Secretary of Labor has not made a compensation determination on disfigurement under subparagraph (A), or for an injury occurring on or after the date of enactment of such Act resulting in a serious disfigurement of the face, head, or neck, proper and equitable compensation in proportion to the severity of the disfigurement, not to exceed $50,000, as determined by the Secretary, shall be awarded in addition to any other compensation payable under this schedule. The applicable maximum compensation for disfigurement provided under this subparagraph shall be adjusted annually on March 1 in accordance with the percentage amount determined by the cost of living adjustment in section 8146a.''.

SEC. 305. SOCIAL SECURITY EARNINGS INFORMATION.

Section 8116 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Labor may require, as a condition of receiving any benefits under this subchapter, that a claimant for such benefits consent to the release by the Social Security Administration of the Social Security earnings information of such claimant.''.

SEC. 306. CONTINUATION OF PAY IN A ZONE OF ARMED CONFLICT.

Section 8118 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking ''Continuation'' and inserting ''Except as provided under subsection (e)(2), continuation'';

(2) in subsection (c), by striking ''subsections (a) and (b)'' and inserting ''subsections (a) and (b) or subsection (e),'';

(3) in subsection (d), by striking ''subsection (a)'' and inserting ''subsection (a) or (e)'';

(4) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(5) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

''(e) CONTINUATION OF PAY IN A ZONE OF ARMED CONFLICT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), the United States shall authorize the continuation of pay of an employee as defined in section 8101(1) of this title (other than those referred to in subparagraph (B) or (E)), who has filed a claim for a period of wage loss due to traumatic injury in performance of duty in a zone of armed conflict (as so determined by the Secretary of Labor under paragraph (3)), as long as the employee files a claim for such wage loss benefit with his immediate superior not later than 45 days following termination of assignment to the zone of armed conflict or return to the United States, whichever occurs later.

''(2) CONTINUATION OF PAY.—Notwithstanding subsection (b), continuation of pay under this subsection shall be furnished for a period not to exceed 135 days without any break in time or waiting period, unless controverted under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor.

''(3) DETERMINATION OF ZONES OF ARMED CONFLICT.—For purposes of this subsection, the Secretary of Labor, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense, shall determine whether a foreign country or other foreign geographic area outside of the United States (as that term is defined in section 202(7) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 4302(7))) is a zone of armed conflict based on whether—

''(A) the Armed Forces of the United States are involved in hostilities in the country or area;

''(B) the incidence of civil insurrection, civil war, terrorism, or wartime conditions threatens physical harm or imminent danger to the health or well-being of United States civilian employees in the country or area;

''(C) the country or area has been designated a combat zone by the President under section 112(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 112(c));

''(D) a contingency operation involving combat operations directly affects civilian employees in the country or area; or

''(E) there exist other relevant conditions and factors.''.

SEC. 307. SUBROGATION OF CONTINUATION OF PAY.

(a) SUBROGATION OF THE UNITED STATES.—Section 8131 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting ''continuation of pay or'' before ''compensation''; and

(2) in subsection (c), by inserting ''continuation of pay or'' before ''compensation already paid''.

(b) ADJUSTMENT AFTER RECOVERY FROM A THIRD PERSON.—Section 8132 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting ''continuation of pay or'' before ''compensation'' the first, second, fourth, and fifth place it appears;

(2) by striking ''in his behalf'' and inserting ''on his behalf''; and

(3) by inserting ''continuation of pay and'' before ''compensation'' the third place it appears.

SEC. 308. FUNERAL EXPENSES.

Section 8134 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''If'' and inserting ''Except as provided in subsection (b), if'';

(2) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a), for deaths occurring on or after the date of enactment of the Federal Workers' Compensation Modernization and Improvement Act, if death results from an injury sustained in the performance of duty, the United States shall pay, to the personal representative of the deceased or otherwise, funeral and burial expenses not to exceed $6,000, in the discretion of the Secretary of Labor. The applicable maximum compensation for burial expenses provided under this subsection shall be adjusted annually on March 1 in accordance with the percentage amount determined by the cost of living adjustment in section 8146a.''.

SEC. 309. EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION FUND.

Section 8147 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking ''except administrative expenses'' and inserting ''including administrative expenses''; and

(B) by striking the last 2 sentences; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the first sentence, by inserting before the period ''and an estimate of a prorata share of the amount of funds necessary to administer this subchapter for the fiscal year beginning in the next calendar year''; and

(B) in the second sentence, by striking ''costs'' and inserting ''amount set out in the statement of costs and administrative expenses furnished pursuant to this subsection''.

SEC. 310. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

Section 8101(1)(D) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting before the semicolon ''who suffered an injury on or prior to March 3, 1979''.

SEC. 311. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided, this title and the amendments made by this title, shall take effect 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 312. PAYGO COMPLIANCE.

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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 2034 offered by the Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. AKAKA. Madam President, I have serious concerns with the FECA provisions in this bill, especially since they would reduce benefits for many employees who were already injured while working in service to this country, such as Federal firefighters, FBI agents, prison guards, and civilians serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, unlike most State workers' comp programs, this bill would reduce benefits for elderly disabled employees when they reach retirement age.

My amendment offers a reasonable alternative by replacing the FECA provisions in this bill with the Republican-led bipartisan FECA reform bill that passed the House by voice vote last year. The House chose not to make benefit changes without the additional information it sought from GAO, and we should follow their lead.

This amendment, supported by more than 20 organizations, would make commonsense reforms that will improve program efficiency and integrity without reducing benefits for disabled seniors, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, this amendment would strike the Federal workers' compensation title in the bill and replace it with very minor provisions that provide no significant cost savings.

The amendment would strike the reforms that bring parity between workers' comp benefits and retirement benefits for Federal workers. It makes it much more comparable to the States' workers' comp plans. The Federal plan is more generous than any State plan. The amendment does nothing to combat the rampant fraud nor constrain costs which have increased by $1 billion.

In the current workers' comp program, we have 2,000 postal employees who are over age 70; we have 6 Federal workers who are age 100 or older. These individuals are not coming back to work. We are trying to focus this program, as it should be, on returning injured workers to work. It is very similar to the proposals that the Obama administration has made. It grandfathers in everyone for 3 years as well as those age 65 and older.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I wish to join my friend from Maine in respectfully opposing Senator AKAKA's amendment.

This workers' compensation program has gotten out of control. Senator COLLINS has worked hard on this with others. Her reform proposal for the Postal Service struck the Obama administration as so sensible that they asked our committee to extend it to all the Federal Government employees.

I urge opposition, respectfully, to the Akaka amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. AKAKA. Cutting workers' compensation benefits governmentwide is not fair and it is not necessary to save the Postal Service. We should follow the House's example and enact bipartisan reforms contained in my amendment and wait until GAO finishes its analysis before making decisions on benefit levels.

I strongly urge my colleagues to adopt my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2034.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 73 Leg.]

YEAS—46

Akaka	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Baucus	Heller	Pryor
Begich	Inouye	Reed
Bingaman	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Blumenthal	Kerry	Rockefeller
Boxer	Klobuchar	Sanders
Brown (OH)	Kohl	Schumer
Cantwell	Lautenberg	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Conrad	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Coons	Menendez	Webb
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wyden
Franken	Murray	
Gillibrand	Nelson (NE)	

NAYS—53

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Graham	Moran
Barrasso	Grassley	Murkowski
Bennet	Hagan	Paul
Blunt	Hatch	Portman
Boozman	Hoeven	Risch
Brown (MA)	Hutchison	Roberts
Burr	Inhofe	Rubio
Carper	Isakson	Sessions
Chambliss	Johanns	Shelby
Coats	Johnson (WI)	Snowe
Coburn	Kyl	Thune
Cochran	Landrieu	Toomey
Collins	Lee	Udall (CO)
Corker	Lieberman	Vitter
Cornyn	Lugar	Warner
Crapo	McCain	Wicker
DeMint	McCaskill	

NOT VOTING—1

Kirk

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 2047, AS MODIFIED

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 2047 and ask unanimous consent that it be modified with the changes that are at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Colorado [Mr. BENNET], proposes an amendment numbered 2047, as modified.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish citizen's service protection advocates, to require the Strategic Advisory Commission on Postal Service Solvency and Innovation to study the advisability of the Postal Service entering into inter-agency agreements with respect to post offices, and to require the Postal Service to develop a strategic plan for entering into such inter-agency agreements)

On page 30, line 15, strike ''and''.

On page 30, lines 16 and 17, insert ''and'' after ''Commission;''.

On page 30, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

''(iii) the chief executive of each State whose residents are served by the postal facility, to allow the chief executive to appoint a citizen's service protection advocate under section 417;''.

On page 34, line 16, insert '', or with the requirements of section 417 of this title'' after ''2012''.

On page 34, line 24, insert ''or with the requirements of section 417 of this title,'' after ''2012,''.

On page 41, strike lines 2 through 4 and insert the following:

''such closing or consolidation to—

''(i) persons served by such post office to ensure that such persons will have an opportunity to present their views; and

''(ii) the chief executive of each State whose residents are served by such post office to allow the chief executive to appoint a citizen's service protection advocate under section 417.''.

On page 84, strike line 8 and all that follows through line 11 and insert the following:

(g) STUDY AND STRATEGIC PLAN ON INTER-AGENCY AGREEMENTS FOR POST OFFICES.—

(1) DUTIES OF ADVISORY COMMISSION.—

(A) STUDY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Commission shall conduct a study concerning the advisability of the Postal Service entering into inter-agency agreements with Federal, State, and local agencies, with respect to post offices, that—

(I) streamline and consolidate services provided by Federal, State, and local agencies;

(II) decrease the costs incurred by Federal agencies in providing services to the general public; and

(III) improve the efficiency and maintain the customer service standards of the Federal, State, and local agencies.

(ii) CLARIFICATION OF INTER-AGENCY AGREEMENTS.—The study under clause (i) shall include consideration of the advisability of the Postal Service entering into an inter-agency agreement with—

(I) the Bureau of the Census for the provision of personnel and resources for the 2020 decennial census;

(II) the department of motor vehicles, or an equivalent agency, of each State for the provision of driver licenses, vehicle registration, and voter registration;

(III) the division of wildlife, the department of natural resources, or an equivalent agency, of each State for the provision of hunting and fishing licenses; and

(IV) other Federal agencies responsible for providing services to the general public.

(B) FINDINGS.—The Advisory Commission shall—

(i) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, submit to the Postal Service the findings of the study conducted under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) incorporate the findings described in clause (i) into the strategic blueprint required under subsection (f).

(2) POSTAL SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date on which the Advisory Commission submits to the Postal Service the findings under paragraph (1)(B), the Postal Service shall submit a strategic plan for entering into inter-agency agreements concerning post offices to—

(i) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(ii) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.

(B) LIMITATIONS.—The strategic plan submitted under subparagraph (A)—

(i) shall be consistent with—

(I) the retail service standards established under section 203 of this Act;

(II) section 411 of title 39, United States Code, as amended by this Act; and

(III) public interest and demand; and

(ii) may not prevent the implementation of Postal Service initiatives with respect to retail access to postal services under sections 203 and 204 of this Act.

(C) COST SAVINGS PROJECTIONS.—The strategic plan submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include, for each proposed inter-agency agreement, a projection of cost savings to be realized by the Postal Service and by any other Federal agency that is a party to the agreement.

(h) TERMINATION OF THE COMMISSION.—The Advisory Commission shall terminate 90 days after the later of—

(1) the date on which the Advisory Commission submits the report on the strategic blueprint for long-term solvency under subsection (f); and

(2) the date on which the Advisory Commission submits the findings on inter-agency agreements for post offices under subsection (g).

(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There

On page 84, between lines 14 and 15, insert the following:

SEC. 214. CITIZEN'S SERVICE PROTECTION ADVOCATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 4 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 417. Citizen's service protection advocates

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'citizen's service protection advocate' means an individual appointed or designated under applicable State law, in the manner described in subsection (b), by the chief executive of a State affected by the closing or consolidation of a post office or postal facility to represent the interests of postal customers affected by the closing or consolidation; and

''(2) the term 'postal facility' has the meaning given the term in section 404(f).

''(b) APPOINTMENT OF ADVOCATE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The chief executive of a State affected by the proposed closing or consolidation of a post office or postal facility may appoint or designate a citizen's service protection advocate to represent the interests of postal customers affected by the proposed closing or consolidation.

''(2) CONSULTATION.—To be considered a citizen's service protection advocate for purposes of this section, an individual must have been appointed or designated by the chief executive of a State in consultation with—

''(A) the mayor (or equivalent official) of any city affected by the closing or consolidation; and

''(B) the commissioner (or equivalent official) of any county or parish affected by the closing or consolidation.

''(c) ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), upon the request of any citizen's service protection advocate appointed under this section, the Postal Service shall provide to the citizen's service protection advocate—

''(A) not later than 15 days after the request, access to any records, reports, audits, reviews, documents, papers, recommendations, or other materials of the Postal Service relating to the closing or consolidation of the relevant post office or postal facility; and

''(B) technical assistance in carrying out the duties of the citizen's service protection advocate.

''(2) LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this section may be construed to require the Postal Service to provide to a citizen's service protection advocate any information that is exempt from disclosure under section 552(b) of title 5.

''(d) COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION.—The Postal Service shall—

''(1) provide for regular and efficient communication between a citizen's service protection advocate and the officer or employee of the Postal Service responsible for the closing or consolidation of the relevant post office or postal facility; and

''(2) consult with the citizen's service protection advocate in developing and implementing service changes that affect postal customers affected by the closing or consolidation of the relevant post office or postal facility.

''(e) TERMINATION OF SERVICE.—An individual may not serve as a citizen's service protection advocate with respect to the closing or consolidation of a post office or postal facility after the later of—

''(1) the date on which the Postal Service determines not to close or consolidate the post office or postal facility; and

''(2) the date on which the Postal Service determines to close or consolidate the post office or postal facility.''.

(b) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections for chapter 4 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''417. Citizen's service protection advocates.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date on which the Postal Service establishes retail service standards under section 203.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise on behalf of amendment No. 2047, which I have cosponsored with Senator BLUNT. I deeply appreciate his leadership.

This bipartisan amendment would allow for a nonpaid advocate to represent communities facing a closure or a consolidation. Advocates would represent their communities' interests throughout closure proceedings and would work with the Postal Service to identify alternative methods to maintain service standards. Advocates would have access to documents, data, and reports related to the proposed closure. Advocates would also have authority to appeal a final decision on closure to the Postal Regulatory Commission if there was a concern it would hurt service standards.

Finally, the amendment would allow the strategic commission already contained within this bill to develop inter-agency agreements so that post offices could provide additional government services, such as the issuance of Social Security cards and hunting and fishing licenses, similar to what it already does for passports.

In 2011, to take 1 year, the Postal Service accepted 5.6 million passport applications that generated $182 million in revenue. This amendment has

the potential to cut government costs, improve access, and help keep post offices open by supplementing revenue streams in a way that is particularly helpful to our rural communities. I hope the Senate could adopt this amendment.

I yield to my colleague Senator BLUNT and thank him for his work.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I worked with Senator BENNET on this amendment. I think it does ensure that communities are not notified a facility is closed without having any opportunity to have input. It provides for advocacy and also gives the post office system some flexibility that they do not have now to provide postal services in new and innovative ways.

I urge my colleagues to adopt this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. I also want to, as a cosponsor of this important piece of legislation, commend Senators BENNET and BLUNT for working together in a truly bipartisan way to make sure we get another good addition to this bill. I agree the communities affected by postal closings should have that strong advocacy to protect them against arbitrary and capricious closings. This bill also asks the Strategic Advisory Commission, established in our bill, to look into how other Federal and State agencies and the Postal Service might enter into interagency agreements in order to better utilize the services and improve efficiencies as referenced by the Senator from Colorado.

They are both fine improvements, and I and the prime sponsors of the amendment support this amendment.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate? If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2047), as modified, was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2083

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 2083.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Tennessee [Mr. CORKER], proposes an amendment numbered 2083.

The amendment is as follows:

On page 39, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 45, line 17, and insert the following:

SEC. 205. OTHER PROVISIONS.

(a) FREQUENCY OF MAIL DELIVERY.—Section 101 of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(h) Subject to the requirements of section 3661, nothing in this title or any other provision of law shall be construed to prevent the Postal Service from taking any action necessary to provide for a 5-day-per-week delivery schedule for mail and a commensurate adjustment in the schedule for rural delivery of mail.''.

(b) OVERALL VALUE OF FRINGE BENEFITS.—Section 1005(f) of title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking the last sentence.

(c) MODERN RATE REGULATION.—Section 3622(d) of title 39, United States Code, is repealed.

(d) DELIVERY SERVICE STANDARDS, MAIL PROCESSING, AND COMMUNITY POST OFFICES.—Sections 201 and 202 of this Act, and the amendments made by those sections, shall have no force or effect.

(e) APPLICABILITY OF REDUCTION-IN-FORCE PROCEDURES.—Section 1206 of title 39, United States Code is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) Collective-bargaining agreements between the Postal Service and bargaining representatives recognized under section 1203, ratified after the date of enactment of this subsection, shall contain no provision restricting the applicability of reduction-in-force procedures under title 5 with respect to members of the applicable bargaining unit.''.

(f) HISTORIC POST OFFICES.—Section 404(d) of title 39, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(7)(A) In this paragraph, the term ''historic post office building'' means a post office building that is a certified historic structure, as that term is defined in section 47(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, this amendment is a balanced approach that strives to give the U.S. Postal Service maximum flexibility in multiple areas as they work toward financial stability. Here is the best part. According to the Congressional Budget Office, this amendment results in savings of $21 billion over the next 10 years. I do not think we have seen amendments that do this, that save $21 billion.

In conclusion, it is clear the Postal Service needs to make drastic changes. I applaud those portions of S. 1789 that allow the Postal Service greater flexibility. But too many provisions in S. 1789 would put more restrictions on the Postal Service, not fewer, and limit the organization's ability to adapt to changing times.

I urge support of my amendment and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise to oppose this amendment. It deals with some issues that the committee and the bipartisan bill have dealt with in a fair and balanced way. It kind of breaks through that proposal we have made. It would permit the Postal Service to move to 5-day delivery service immediately. It would increase rates without a cap. It also removes some protections that are in the bill at this time.

I think this amendment, if adopted, would lead to the kind of curtailments in postal operations that would actually not help the Postal Service but diminish revenues and put it more dramatically into deficits.

With respect to my friend, the Senator from Tennessee, who sponsored it, I oppose this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate? If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment. The yeas and nays have been ordered, and the clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The result was announced—yeas 29, nays 70, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 74 Leg.]

YEAS—29

Alexander	Graham	McCain
Ayotte	Hatch	McConnell
Burr	Hutchison	Paul
Chambliss	Inhofe	Risch
Coats	Isakson	Rubio
Coburn	Johanns	Sessions
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Cornyn	Kyl	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
DeMint	Lugar	

NAYS—70

Akaka	Gillibrand	Nelson (NE)
Barrasso	Grassley	Nelson (FL)
Baucus	Hagan	Portman
Begich	Harkin	Pryor
Bennet	Heller	Reed
Bingaman	Hoeven	Reid
Blumenthal	Inouye	Roberts
Blunt	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Boozman	Kerry	Sanders
Boxer	Klobuchar	Schumer
Brown (MA)	Kohl	Shaheen
Brown (OH)	Landrieu	Snowe
Cantwell	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Cardin	Leahy	Tester
Carper	Levin	Thune
Casey	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Cochran	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Collins	McCaskill	Warner
Conrad	Menendez	Webb
Coons	Merkley	Whitehouse
Durbin	Mikulski	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	Wyden
Feinstein	Murkowski	
Franken	Murray	

NOT VOTING—1

Kirk

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the last vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2049

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, the next amendment on the list is Senator MIKULSKI's amendment. Senator MIKULSKI has decided not to introduce her amendment. I thank her for that, and we will go next to Senator AKAKA's amendment numbered 2049.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 2049.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Hawaii [Mr. AKAKA] proposes an amendment numbered 2049.

Mr. AKAKA. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To allow supervisory and other managerial organizations to participate in the planning and development of changes in, or termination of, pay policies and schedules and fringe benefit programs)

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 106. SUPERVISORY AND OTHER MANAGERIAL ORGANIZATIONS.

Section 1004 of title 39, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), in the second sentence, by inserting ''as provided under subsection (d) and any changes in, or termination of, pay policies and schedules and fringe benefit programs for members of the supervisors' organization as provided under subsection (e)'' before the period; and

(2) in subsection (e)(1), by inserting '', or termination of,'' after ''any changes in''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 2049 offered by the Senator from Hawaii, Mr. AKAKA.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, current law provides postmasters and post office supervisors with the opportunity to consult over pay and benefits. This is not collective bargaining and does not result in a contract.

Unfortunately, the Postal Service tries to modify, reduce or eliminate supervisors' benefits outside the normal consultation process, arguing that Congress intended this consultation for the creation but not elimination of benefit programs. This amendment simply clarifies existing law that the consultation requirement applies to any changes to pay or benefits.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I rise to support the amendment offered by my friend from Hawaii. The Postal Service is going to need the support of all its employees and managers to turn around its current decline.

Postmasters and postal supervisors are a real and important human asset for the Postal Service and we should do what we can to foster productive and constructive collaboration between the Postal Service and the senior employees. The Akaka amendment just clarifies and strengthens existing requirements for consultation, not collective bargaining, for the scheduling of changes and terminations of pay and benefit programs. I urge my colleagues to support it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, let me just reinforce that this is not giving collective bargaining rights to postmasters or to postal supervisors. I support Senator AKAKA's amendment. All it is trying to do is strengthen a provision that is in current law that asks for the Postmaster General to consult with the postmasters and the other supervisory organizations when there are changes made in work schedules or benefits. They should have the right to have their views heard. It does not give them a veto. It does not authorize collective bargaining or contract negotiations in any way. I wish to emphasize that because there has been misinformation about what this amendment, in fact, entails.

I support this amendment and I urge its adoption.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. AKAKA. I ask for a voice vote.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I object. I would like a rollcall vote. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 75 Leg.]

YEAS—57

Akaka	Gillibrand	Murray
Baucus	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Begich	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bennet	Inouye	Pryor
Bingaman	Johnson (SD)	Reed
Blumenthal	Kerry	Reid
Boxer	Klobuchar	Rockefeller
Brown (MA)	Kohl	Sanders
Brown (OH)	Landrieu	Schumer
Cantwell	Lautenberg	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Snowe
Carper	Levin	Stabenow
Casey	Lieberman	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Conrad	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Coons	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Webb
Feinstein	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Murkowski	Wyden

NAYS—42

Alexander	Enzi	McCain
Ayotte	Graham	McConnell
Barrasso	Grassley	Moran
Blunt	Hatch	Paul
Boozman	Heller	Portman
Burr	Hoeven	Risch
Chambliss	Hutchison	Roberts
Coats	Inhofe	Rubio
Coburn	Isakson	Sessions
Cochran	Johanns	Shelby
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Cornyn	Kyl	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
DeMint	Lugar	Wicker

NOT VOTING—1

Kirk

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The Senator from Connecticut.

AMENDMENT NO. 2025

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I believe the next amendment in order is amendment No. 2025 by the Senator from Kentucky.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 2025.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 2025.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To end the mailbox use monopoly)

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. ____. ENDING THE MAILBOX USE MONOPOLY.

Section 1725 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''established, approved, or accepted'' and all that follows through ''mail route'' and inserting ''or post office box owned by the Postal Service or located on Postal Service property''.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, it is a Federal crime for anyone but the U.S. Postal Service to use a mailbox. The United States is the only country in the world that grants a mailbox monopoly. You can purchase your mailbox, you can install it, you can fix it, but you do not truly own it because you do not control what goes in your mailbox. If someone vandalizes your mailbox, you are responsible for it. You repair it. But you cannot decide what goes in it. If you put something in a mailbox without the permission of the U.S. Postal Service, if your child puts a birthday invitation in a mailbox, it can be a $5,000 fine. If an organization puts something in a mailbox other than through the Postal Service, it is a $10,000 fine.

My amendment would grant individual owners of mailboxes the right to make decisions about their mailboxes. Adopting this amendment would restore individual mailbox choice. So I am for mailbox choice, and I hope the body is. It seems to me a fundamentally American concept to control access to your own mailbox. I urge adoption of this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would like to inform the Senate that this will be the last vote tonight. I have spoken to Senator MCCONNELL. I know there are a lot of important things that committees have to do tomorrow, so we are going to start voting on finishing the postal bill tomorrow at 2 o'clock. We appreciate everyone's cooperation today. We will need some more tomorrow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, there are at least three problems with the amendment offered by the Senator from Kentucky.

The first is a practical problem. How is the Postal Service going to deal with a situation where at one house there is a monopoly on the use of the post office box and at the next house there is not a monopoly? How is that going to work?

Second, mail often contains highly sensitive pieces, such as medical records, bills, personal correspondence. Continuation of the mailbox monopoly is necessary to preserve the safety, the security, and the privacy of mail.

The third argument is that if you repeal the mailbox monopoly, you will leave rural America behind. There will be plenty of competition in large cities, but who will be left to serve rural America? Only the Postal Service. And that will further drive up its costs because it will be losing customers.

I strongly urge opposition to this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The result was announced—yeas 35, nays 64, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 76 Leg.]

YEAS—35

Alexander	Enzi	Moran
Ayotte	Graham	Paul
Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hatch	Roberts
Boozman	Heller	Rubio
Chambliss	Isakson	Sessions
Coburn	Johanns	Shelby
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Corker	Kyl	Toomey
Cornyn	Lee	Vitter
Crapo	McCain	Wicker
DeMint	McConnell	

NAYS—64

Akaka	Hagan	Murray
Baucus	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Begich	Hoeven	Nelson (FL)
Bennet	Hutchison	Portman
Bingaman	Inhofe	Pryor
Blumenthal	Inouye	Reed
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Brown (MA)	Kerry	Rockefeller
Brown (OH)	Klobuchar	Sanders
Burr	Kohl	Schumer
Cantwell	Landrieu	Shaheen
Cardin	Lautenberg	Snowe
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Coats	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Collins	Lugar	Udall (NM)
Conrad	Manchin	Warner
Coons	McCaskill	Webb
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden
Franken	Mikulski	
Gillibrand	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—1

Kirk

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk 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.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for 10 minutes each.

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

REMEMBERING JUDGE JAMES G. WEDDLE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute and bid farewell to a Kentuckian I knew well and considered a good friend. The Honorable Judge James G. Weddle of Casey County, KY, passed away recently, shortly after announcing he would be stepping down from the bench. He was 71.

Judge Weddle had a remarkable legal career that spanned over 45 years; much of it in public service. A graduate of the University of Kentucky School of Law, Judge Weddle served as Casey County Attorney for 16 years, and served as a circuit judge on the 29th Judicial Circuit of Kentucky from 1998 until his untimely passing; he planned to retire in May.

What strikes me the most about Judge Weddle, after having the benefit of his friendship, is how much he valued public service to the people of Casey County and Kentucky. Right up until the end of his career, he was always striving to be better. He felt he had not yet reached his peak. Being the best—and doing the best, for the benefit of all who came into his courtroom was important to him.

A scholarly man, Judge Weddle was sure to read all the latest law books and articles, and often knew more about recent legal events than lawyers in his courtroom who were half his age. He was well known for his ability to cite case after case without having to reference a computer or his law books. Simply put, he loved the law. And he loved the people of his community. You couldn't ask for a finer combination of passions in a Kentucky circuit court judge. The people of the Commonwealth were blessed to have him.

Elaine and I extend our deepest sympathies to the judge's family, especially his wife, Zona; his son, James; his daughters, Lucinda, Suzanne, Andrea, and Sarah; his grandchildren, Jack, Jeb, and Beau; his brother, R.C.; his sister, Delores; and many other friends and family members. The judge was preceded in death by his sister, Norma Jean.

At this time, Mr. President, I would like to ask my Senate colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of the Honorable Judge James G. Weddle. The people of Kentucky are the better for his many years of service.

A newspaper in my home State, the Casey County News, published an excellent article highlighting the Judge's life and career, as well as his obituary. I ask unanimous consent that said materials be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the materials were ordered to appear as follows:

[From the Casey County News, Apr. 18, 2012]

JUDGE WEDDLE REMEMBERED—CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE DIES DAYS AFTER ANNOUNCING RETIREMENT

(By Larry Rowell)

A Casey County native who devoted his life to his family, the law, and to the people of Casey County has died after an extended illness.

Casey Circuit Court Judge James G. Weddle died in the early morning hours of April 11 at home surrounded by family members. He was 71.

Just a few days before, Weddle had announced that he was retiring May 1 from the 29th Judicial Circuit, which included Casey and Adair counties.

Weddle was serving his second eight-year term, having first been elected in 1998.

Prior to serving as a circuit judge, Weddle became an attorney in 1966 after graduating from the University of Kentucky School of Law. He served as Casey County Attorney for 16 years and also in private practice.

Fellow judges and attorneys had nothing but high praise for Weddle and a legal career that spanned more than 45 years.

''I have known Judge Weddle for many years and he was distinguished by his dedication to his work. No other judge I know anywhere worked harder with a completeness and constancy of his work,'' said Chief Justice John Minton of the Kentucky Supreme Court.

Casey and Adair County Commonwealth's Attorney Brian Wright prosecuted many cases before Weddle.

''I had a lot of respect for Judge Weddle, especially for his legal mind. He devoted his life to the legal profession,'' Wright said.

Also, Weddle was known for his vast knowledge of legal cases and his ability to cite cases without ever pulling a law book off the shelf.

''He read books, books, and books, and articles on the Internet. He didn't golf or hunt or fish. His life was the law,'' Wright said.

Still, Weddle was known for being a fair judge who had an open mind.

''It was never his way or the highway when it came to the law,'' said Janelle ''Tootsie'' Roberts, who served as Weddle's secretary for 22 years.

Wright said that in one particular case he was trying before Weddle, he was able to show the judge a prior case that changed the way he thought about it.

''He was always open to something new,'' Wright said.

Roberts said that in addition to loving the law, Weddle also was a history buff who had a knack for remembering dates and events.

''Judge Weddle loved history and sometimes in court he would ask, Today is December 7, can anyone tell me what happened on that date?''' Roberts said.

And there was another belief that Minton, Wright, and Roberts shared about Weddle his love for the people of Casey County.

''In the last conversation that I had with Judge Weddle where he told me he was going

to resign, he told me how important his work was to him and how reluctant he was to give it up. He kept thinking he was going to get better,'' Minton said.

''I hate to lose dedicated people like Judge Weddle. It's a loss to the state and to the counties he served. And, he loved Casey County,'' Minton said.

A memorial service for Weddle was held on Monday. A complete obituary can be found on page 4.

THE HONORABLE JAMES G. WEDDLE

Judge James G. Weddle passed away on Wednesday, April 11, 2012, at his residence. He was born on March 21, 1941, in Liberty, Kentucky, and was 71. James was the son of the late Rupert Christopher Weddle and Laura Jane Price Weddle and a Circuit Judge of the 29th Judicial Circuit of Kentucky. He was preceded in death by one sister; Norma Jean Weddle Murphy.

Survivors include his spouse, Zona Ellis Weddle; one son, James Bryan Weddle of Lexington, Kentucky; four daughters, Lucinda Jane Weddle (and Rick Grodesky) of Seattle, Washington, Suzanne Weddle (and Richard Webster) of Kansas City, Missouri, Andrea Weddle of Oakland, California, and Sarah Jean Weddle South (and Alex South) of Spring Lake, North Carolina; three grandchildren, Jack, Jeb, and Beau South; one brother, R.C. (and Alma Vida) Weddle of Liberty, Kentucky; and one sister, Delores (and Gerald) Sasser of Louisville, Kentucky.

Visitation will be from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Sunday evening April 15, 2012, at the Bartle Funeral Home Chapel. Memorial Services officiated by the Reverend Jimmy Brown will begin at 2:00 p.m. Monday afternoon, April 16, 2012, at the Bartle Funeral Home Chapel.

The family requests in lieu of flowers please send memorials to the Duke Children's Hospital and Health Care, P.O. Box 2975 c/o Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina 27710, or make a gift to your favorite charity.

Online condolences may be expressed at www.Bartlefuneralhomes.com. Bartle Funeral Home is in charge of all arrangements.

OBSERVING ARMENIAN GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this is a week to bear witness. Today, April 24, we mark Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day—the day on which we remind one another of the organized campaign of deportation, expropriation, starvation—and atrocity perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against its Armenian population, beginning with the detention and eventual execution of hundreds of Armenian community members on April 24, 1915, just as, a few days ago, we marked Holocaust Remembrance Day, bearing witness to the attempt by Nazi Germany to destroy Europe's Jewish population.

Why do we mark these days? Because in recognizing and condemning the horror of these acts, we affirm our own humanity, we ensure that the victims of these atrocities will not be forgotten, and we warn those who believe they can perpetrate similar crimes with impunity that they will not escape the world's notice. We remind ourselves that we must never again allow such mass assaults against human decency without acting to stop them. And we mark these atrocities because only by acknowledging the violence and inhumanity can we begin the process of reconciling populations who even today are haunted by the damage done decades ago.

The Ottoman campaign against the Armenians resulted in the deaths of over 1.5 million people. Large numbers of Armenians fled their homeland to seek safety elsewhere, including in Michigan and other communities in the United States. Some have sought to deny that these events constituted genocide, but the historical record is clear and undeniable. I ask any who deny the historical reality of the Armenian genocide to read ''Giants of the Earth,'' the moving memoir of native Detroiter Mitch Kehetian and his search for the fate of beloved family members during the tragedy.

It is important for us to remember that these atrocities were not committed by the Republic of Turkey. I hope that the governments of Turkey and Armenia, encouraged by the good will of the community of nations, can heal the divisions that remain from long-ago events that nonetheless remain painful. We should also remember that Turkey played a valuable role in supporting the international community's efforts to free Libya from dictatorship and value the role Turkey is playing today in helping to resolve the tragedy unfolding in neighboring Syria.

It is doubly tragic that the Armenian genocide is now seen as the beginning of a decades-long series of mass atrocities. The inability or unwillingness of the international community to come to the aid of the Armenians emboldened others—including Adolph Hitler, who told his commanders on the eve of the invasion of Poland, ''Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?'' And so, he launched the Holocaust, ending the lives of six million Jews simply because they were Jewish.

All people would like to believe that they live in a more enlightened age, one in which we have overcome the inhumanity of the past. And yet our own time is not immune from mass atrocity. Recent events in Libya and Syria, to name just two, remind us that violence, oppression, and disregard for human rights remain with us.

Just as mass atrocity is still with us, so are human courage and the determination to stand against atrocity. When the international community came together to support the people of Libya against the oppressive Libyan regime, we helped accomplish something important and powerful for Libyans, but beyond that, we sent a message to other dictators that they might not escape a response from the international community.

I say ''might not'' because we still have a long way to go as a world community in confronting murderous dictators. The current regime in Syria is engaged in a campaign of attack and intimidation against its own people. The examples of history make clear the international community's obligation to speak out and to take action. It is unfortunate that nations in a position to do so, such as China and Russia, have blocked the United Nations from taking stronger steps. The United States and its allies must now seek to implement additional steps to protect innocent civilians and hold the Assad regime in Syria accountable, including the possibility of establishing safe havens along the border with Turkey.

While we mark these historic crimes, it is also important to recognize signs of progress. It is significant that the United States is now taking what promises to be not just a stronger approach to mass atrocities, but a more effective one. A presidential directive signed by President Obama last August states clearly: ''Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States of America.'' And yesterday, the President announced that he will implement the recommendations resulting from a comprehensive review of U.S. policy with regard to mass atrocity.

The creation of an Atrocity Prevention Board will ensure that prevention of these human tragedies is a focus of U.S. policy, a national security interest we will pursue, bringing all appropriate elements of American policy and power to bear. Importantly, U.S. policy recognizes that military action is not our only means to prevent mass atrocity, and that every aspect of our international involvement—intelligence, diplomacy, economic and development policy, as well as, when called for, military power—can be called upon.

We cannot prevent the madness that, even in our era, too often leads to unspeakable crimes. But we can remember. We can speak out. And we can act, with the range of instruments at our disposal, to prevent those in the forefront of such madness from acting on their inhuman schemes. May Americans never forget the genocide visited upon the Armenians we remember today. And may our collective memories always remind us of our responsibility to prevent atrocity in our own time.

TIBET

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to draw the Senate's attention to the ongoing, intensifying and intolerable oppression occurring in Tibet.

Over the past year, at least 32 Tibetans, most of them young men and women, have set themselves on fire to protest Chinese policies that are infringing on Tibetan self-governance, cultural traditions and religious beliefs and practices. Of them, it is believed that at least 23 have died. Eleven have self-immolated in the past 2 months alone. These incidents do not represent a temporary deviation from a peaceful norm but are instead the latest response to a tragic, and unfortunately

lengthy, history of religious and cultural controls, human rights violations and oppression of the Tibetan people.

Reports from Tibet indicate that the Chinese government is further restricting access to foreign journalists and tightening security throughout the region. Chinese police and other officials in Tibet are forcing some nuns and monks to publicly denounce the Dalai Lama. Schools in some provinces have been forced by the government to switch their official language of instruction from Tibetan to Mandarin Chinese. These policies, among others, have incited Tibetans to protest and fight for the survival of their cultural identity and basic freedoms.

In recent weeks, a state-run Chinese website and news agency accused the Dalai Lama of encouraging Tibetans to set themselves on fire and of advocating ''Nazi'' racial policies. Mr. President, many of us in the Senate have had the privilege of meeting the Dalai Lama and I am proud to consider him a friend. It is baseless, offensive, and deplorable to slander the Dalai Lama in this way or to suggest that he is inciting violence. He is a man whose entire life has been devoted to peace.

For decades, the Dalai Lama has sought to work with the Chinese government to reach a peaceful resolution over Tibet's political status. The Dalai Lama has, time and time again, extended a hand of friendship to Beijing, which has consistently responded by drastically misrepresenting his views and accusing him of inciting violence, perhaps to draw attention away from their own brutal actions. The Chinese government must know that violent crackdowns and cultural genocide will never be condoned.

We share many interests with China and the future can bring our two countries closer. China's tremendous economic transformation in the past few decades has brought great benefits to the Chinese people and has spurred economic development in other countries. That said, the economic emergence of China and its increased presence on the world stage must be accompanied by respect for human rights. China cannot be a global leader while crushing peaceful dissent in its own backyard, destroying the culture of the Tibetan people, and imprisoning Tibetan leaders.

I want to mention one of these imprisoned leaders, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche. Tenzin Delek was recognized by the Dalai Lama as a reincarnate lama in the 1980s. He was detained in April 2002 on charges of exploding bombs and spreading politically charged leaflets and, following a closed trial, sentenced to death on December 2, 2002. After appeal, Tenzin Delek's sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. No evidence of his involvement in any illegal activity has ever been made public. In fact, before being detained, Tenzin Delek was well-known for educating children in rural areas and helping to build monasteries. Tenzin Delek's imprisonment is just one of the many examples of persecution of Tibetan leaders that appear to be motivated by a desire to curb Tibetan religious and cultural expression.

Many Tibetan protestors, both imprisoned and free, are not seeking independence from China. Tibetan leaders, including the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Prime Minister, Lobsang Sangay, who I was pleased to meet earlier this year, have explicitly stated that they support the Middle-Way' policy, which seeks autonomy for Tibet within the People's Republic of China. Tibetans are not fighting for separation from China; they are fighting for the freedom of religious belief guaranteed to them by the Chinese Constitution. They are fighting for the security of their monks and monasteries. They are fighting for freedom of expression, association, and assembly, for personal liberty, for unrestricted media access, and for the fundamental principles of democracy that we in the United States take for granted.

We cannot and will not abandon the Tibetan people, who have long been our unwavering friends. We will stand by them to protect the principles of democracy in the face of China's repressive policies. Together, the Tibetans and the Chinese can peacefully reach a solution that meets the needs and aspirations of both peoples. It is imperative that we support peaceful dialogue and discourage violent confrontation whenever it occurs, whether supported by the Chinese authorities or Tibetan protestors.

I am a cosponsor of Senator FEINSTEIN's resolution, S. Res. 356, A Resolution Expressing Support for the People of Tibet, and I urge other Senators to do so. We can foster closer, cooperative relations with China, but until China works with Tibetan leaders to pursue a new way forward, their reputation in the community of nations, and their ability to act as a global power, will remain tarnished. I hope that, in the years to come, the young Tibetans who sacrificed their lives in the past year will be remembered as the catalysts for a political dialogue that cemented a peaceful future for both Tibet and China.

97TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise today to solemnly recognize the 97th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

In 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide based in part on the horrific crimes perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against the Armenian people between 1915–1923. Yet, in the 63 years that have passed since the Convention was adopted, successive U.S. administrations have refused to call the deliberate massacre of the Armenians by what it was—a genocide.

For many years, I have urged these administrations to right this terrible wrong, and I do so again today, calling on President Obama to acknowledge unequivocally—as he did as a Senator—that the Armenian genocide is a widely documented fact supported by an overwhelming body of historical evidence.

The Armenian genocide—along with the Holocaust—is one the most studied cases of genocide in history. A number of sovereign nations, ranging from Argentina to France, as well as 43 U.S. States have recognized what happened as genocide. Yet, successive U.S. administrations continue only to refer to the Armenian genocide as annihilation, massacre or murder.

Every day that goes by without full acknowledgment by the United States of these undeniable facts prolongs the pain felt by descendants of the victims and the entire Armenian community.

There is no room for discretion when dealing with unspeakable crimes against humanity; genocide must be called genocide, murder must be called murder. And every day that goes by without the U.S. acknowledgment of what happened to the Armenian people in the early 20th century undermines the United States' role as a beacon for human rights around the world.

The United States' credibility is particularly important as we seek to compel international condemnation of and active response to those who are perpetrating extreme violence today—whether it be in individual cases of human rights abuses or in cases of government-driven attacks against citizens protesting for greater freedom and opportunity.

The United States cannot and does not turn a blind eye to atrocities around the globe. In fact, the United States is often the first to speak out in the face of violence and unspeakable suffering. But sadly, our Nation is on the wrong side of history when it comes to the Armenian genocide. It is long past time to do the right thing.

So this April 24, as we pause to remember the victims and to honor the countless contributions Armenian Americans have made to our great country, I hope that the U.S. will finally and firmly stand on the right side of history and officially condemn the crimes of 1915–1923 by their appropriate name—genocide.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING GEORGE COWAN

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to speak about the life of George Cowan who died last Friday in Los Alamos at the age of 92.

From 1949 through 1988, he distinguished himself at the Los Alamos National Laboratory where he was a scientist—a nuclear chemist—and a senior administrator.

In 1984, he was instrumental in founding The Santa Fe Institute which has achieved great recognition for its work in complexity and self-organizing systems.

A Founding Director of the Los Alamos National Bank, he was one of the several leaders in that community who labored to bring banking to a town that was considered ''temporary'' and not deserving of its own bank. In 1963, LANB was chartered and has grown to be one of the leading financial institutions in New Mexico. At his death, George was still serving on the Board of Directors.

George's interests and contributions are too numerous to detail in these brief comments, but I will mention his passion to understand the keys to the early development of children. He believed there were great benefits society could reap by giving more attention to successful models of early childhood education.

George's life and work were invaluable to our Nation and to my home State of New Mexico. I was proud to count him as a friend, and prouder still that he considered me one. I join the many others who will miss him.●

RECOGNIZING VOLUNTEERS FROM YARDLEY, PENNSYLVANIA

● Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today, I would like to acknowledge the great work of volunteers in Yardley, PA, especially the students at Pennsbury High School who have been selected as the 2012 Make a Difference Day winners. Make a Difference Day is a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors, and this annual day of service mobilizes more than 3 million volunteers to effect change in their communities.

This group of outstanding volunteers from Yardley, PA is led by Neha Gupta. Neha founded Empower Orphans, a non-profit organization that has leveraged $325,000 in donations and grants to clothe and feed Indian children, create a sewing center and set up libraries at four schools. Near to her home in Bucks County, PA, Neha, now 15, identified children in need. In the months leading up to Make a Difference Day, Neha and a group of volunteers gathered 3,000 books and bought colorful furnishings for the neighboring Feltonville Intermediate School library. On Make a Difference Day, the team cleaned up, decorated and stocked the shelves of the library. Since October's project, Neha has also started an Empower Orphans club at her high school and plans to hold a Make a Difference Day Project every year.

I wish to congratulate Neha and her team and thank them for their service.●

TRIBUTE TO RICK MOSSMAN

● Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor the public service of Rick Lee Mossman, who is retiring from the National Park Service after 35 years of dedicated service to protecting our nation's treasures and the people who visit them.

Rick was born on April 30, 1955, to Dick and Carolyn Mossman in Topeka, KS. By the time he was 7 years old, Rick knew he wanted to become a park ranger. His life's work began in May of 1975, when he started his first job with the National Park Service as a seasonal GS–3 general ranger at Buffalo National River in Arkansas. In a career spanning more than 3 decades, Rick Mossman served at nine National Park Service units from Washington, DC to Alaska. During this time, he was an interpreter, front country and backcountry patrol ranger, a district ranger, and finally a Chief Ranger at his current location of Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota.

For the last 12 years, he has served on an All-Risk Incident Management Team tasked with responding to disasters such as Hurricanes Isabel and Rita or to managing the search effort for lost hikers. He has been the team's incident commander since September of 2009.

Rick earned a degree in Wildlife Biology at Kansas State University. He and his wife Julie of 21 years have two sons, Thomas 18 and Jackson 16.

Rick has passionately protected many of the special places that help define the United States of America. He has done this with a strong sense of dedication to duty and commitment to excellence. His work on the Intermountain Incident Management Team speaks to this. When a disaster befalls a National Park Service unit in the Intermountain Region or elsewhere in the Nation, the first call from the Regional Office is to Rick and his team to respond and help park service employees in peril. It is this dedication to helping others at a moment's notice that defines Rick's work ethic.

The focus of Rick's life work has been the protection of public lands and the resources contained therein. He has accomplished this duty with an intense love for the places he worked. It is because of the service of people like Rick Mossman that visitors, past and present and future, enjoy the scenic beauty and heritage that make up the National Park Service.

I am proud to recognize and honor Rick's service to the National Park Service and am delighted to join with his family and friends in congratulating him on his retirement. I wish Rick and Julie all the best as they begin a new chapter in their lives.●

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

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

S. 2338. A bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and ordered placed on the calendar.

S. 2343. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to extend the reduced interest rate for Federal Direct Stafford Loans, and for other purposes.

S. 2344. A bill to extend the National Flood Insurance Program until December 31, 2012.

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–5788. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Federal Airways; Alaska'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0110)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5789. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revocation of Multiple Domestic, Alaskan, and Hawaiian Compulsory Reporting Points'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2012–0129)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5790. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Modification of Area Navigation Route T–288; WY'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2011–1193)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5791. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Colorado Springs, CO'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2011–1191)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5792. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Jacksonville, NC'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0556)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5793. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Springfield, TN'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2011–0591)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5794. A communication from the Senior Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Bellefonte, PA'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2011–1337)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2012; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5795. A communication from the Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, proposed legislation to

authorize the Transportation Security Administration to hold itself out as a private shipper for purposes of testing air cargo security measures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–5796. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order blocking the property and suspending the entry into the United States of certain persons with respect to grave human rights abuses by the Governments of Iran and Syria via information technology; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5797. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Flood Elevation Determinations'' ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA–2012–0003)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 20, 2012; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5798. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Addition of Certain Persons to the Entity List; and Implementation of Entity List Annual Review Changes'' (RIN0694–AF57) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 20, 2012; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5799. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Burma that was declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5800. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 1 (Scotch) Spearmint Oil for the 2011–2012 Marketing Year'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–10–0094; FV11–985–1B IR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 20, 2012; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5801. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pears Grown in Oregon and Washington; Assessment Rate Decrease for Fresh Pears'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–11–0060; FV11–927–2 FIR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 20, 2012; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5802. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pears Grown in Oregon and Washington; Assessment Rate Decrease for Processed Pears'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–11–0070; FV11–927–FIR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 20, 2012; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5803. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Mango Promotion, Research, and Information Order; Assessment Increase'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–11–0021) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 20, 2012; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5804. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Dried Prunes Produced in California; Decreased Assessment Rate'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–11–0068; FV11–993–1 FIR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 20, 2012; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5805. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revision of Cotton Classification Procedures for Determining Cotton Leaf Grade'' (RIN0581–AD19; Docket No. AMS–CN–11–0066) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 20, 2012; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5806. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pistachios Grown in California, Arizona, and New Mexico; Decreased Assessment Rate'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–11–0077; FV11–983–2 FIR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 20, 2012; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LIEBERMAN, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

S. 237. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to enhance the oversight authorities of the Comptroller General, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 112–159).

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. LEVIN:

S. 2339. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain clock movements; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEVIN:

S. 2340. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on chime melody rod assemblies; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

S. 2341. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to accept the quitclaim, disclaimer, and relinquishment of a railroad right-of-way within and adjacent to Pike National Forest in El Paso County, Colorado; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. JOHANNS):

S. 2342. A bill to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. REID:

S. 2343. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to extend the reduced interest rate for Federal Direct Stafford Loans, and for other purposes; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 2344. A bill to extend the National Flood Insurance Program until December 31, 2012; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. AKAKA):

S. 2345. A bill to amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to permit the Government of the District of Columbia to determine the fiscal year period, to make local funds of the District of Columbia for a fiscal year available for use by the District upon enactment of the local budget act for the year subject to a period of Congressional review, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. LAUTENBERG):

S. Res. 432. A resolution designating April 30, 2012, as ''Dia de los Ninos: Celebrating Young Americans''; considered and agreed to.

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

S. Res. 433. A resolution designating April 2012 as ''National Child Abuse Prevention Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. CONRAD):

S. Res. 434. A resolution supporting the goal of preventing and effectively treating Alzheimer's disease by the year 2025, as articulated in the draft National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease from the Department of Health and Human Services; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 118

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 118, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to allow workers who attain age 65 after 1981 and before 1992 to choose either lump sum payments over four years totaling $5,000 or an improved benefit computation formula under a new 10-year rule governing the transition to the changes in benefit computation rules enacted in the Social Security Amendments of 1977, and for other purposes.

S. 296

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 296, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide the Food and Drug Administration with improved capacity to prevent drug shortages.

S. 418

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) 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. 687

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 687, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the 15-year recovery period for qualified leasehold improvement property, qualified restaurant property, and qualified retail improvement property.

S. 1086

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) 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. 1576

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1576, a bill to measure the progress of relief, recovery, reconstruction, and development efforts in Haiti following the earthquake of January 12, 2010, and for other purposes.

S. 1622

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1622, a bill to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, to relocate to Jerusalem the United States Embassy in Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 1935

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1935, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition and celebration of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the March of Dimes Foundation.

At the request of Mr. ENZI, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1935, supra.

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1935, supra.

S. 2004

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2004, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal to the troops who defended Bataan during World War II.

S. 2096

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2096, a bill to provide for Federal agencies to develop public access policies relating to research conducted by employees of that agency or from funds administered by that agency.

S. 2103

At the request of Mr. LEE, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2103, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect pain-capable unborn children in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

S. 2121

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2121, a bill to modify the Department of Defense Program Guidance relating to the award of Post-Deployment/Mobilization Respite Absence administrative absence days to members of the reserve components to exempt any member whose qualified mobilization commenced before October 1, 2011, and continued on or after that date, from the changes to the program guidance that took effect on that date.

S. 2122

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2122, a bill to clarify the definition of navigable waters, and for other purposes.

S. 2134

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2134, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for certain requirements relating to the retirement, adoption, care, and recognition of military working dogs, and for other purposes.

S. 2143

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2143, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that paper which is commonly recycled does not constitute a qualified energy resource under the section 45 credit for renewable electricity production.

S. 2148

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2148, a bill to amend the Toxic Substance Control Act relating to lead-based paint renovation and remodeling activities.

S. 2165

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2165, a bill to enhance strategic cooperation between the United States and Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2172

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2172, a bill to remove the limit on the anticipated award price for contracts awarded under the procurement program for women-owned small business concerns, and for other purposes.

S. 2205

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2205, a bill to prohibit funding to negotiate a United Nations Arms Trade Treaty that restricts the Second Amendment rights of United States citizens.

S. 2242

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2242, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes.

S. 2255

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2255, a bill to amend chapter 1 of title 36, United States Code, to add Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day as a patriotic and National observance.

S. 2280

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2280, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act and the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require certain creditors to obtain certifications from institutions of higher education, and for other purposes.

S. 2282

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2282, a bill to extend the authorization of appropriations to carry out approved wetlands conservation projects under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act through fiscal year 2017.

S. RES. 412

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 412, a resolution commending the African Union for committing to a coordinated military response, comprised of 5,000 troops from Uganda, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan, in order to fortify ongoing efforts to arrest Joseph Kony and senior commanders of the Lord's Resistance Army and to stop the crimes against humanity and mass atrocities committed by them.

AMENDMENT NO. 2032

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2032 intended to be proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

AMENDMENT NO. 2036

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2036 intended to be proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

AMENDMENT NO. 2042

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2042 intended to be proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

AMENDMENT NO. 2043

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2043 proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

AMENDMENT NO. 2047

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2047 proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

AMENDMENT NO. 2050

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2050 intended to be proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

AMENDMENT NO. 2056

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2056 proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2056 proposed to S. 1789, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 2060

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2060 proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

AMENDMENT NO. 2071

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2071 intended to be proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

AMENDMENT NO. 2072

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2072 intended to be proposed to S. 1789, a bill to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REID:

S. 2343. A bill to amend the Higher Education act of 1965 to extend the reduced interest rate for Federal Direct Stafford Loans, and for other purposes; placed on the calendar.

Mr. REID. 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. 2343

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 ''Stop the Student Loan Interest Rate Hike Act of 2012''.

SEC. 2. INTEREST RATE EXTENSION.

Section 455(b)(7)(D) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(b)(7)(D)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking ''and before July 1, 2012,'' and inserting ''and before July 1, 2013,''; and

(2) in clause (v), by striking ''and before July 1, 2012,'' and inserting ''and before July 1, 2013,''.

SEC. 3. EMPLOYMENT TAX TREATMENT OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICE BUSINESSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1402 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(m) SPECIAL RULES FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICE BUSINESSES.—

''(1) SHAREHOLDERS PROVIDING SERVICES TO SPECIFIED S CORPORATIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an applicable shareholder who provides substantial services with respect to a professional service business referred to in subparagraph (C) of a specified S corporation—

''(i) such shareholder shall be treated as engaged in the trade or business of such professional service business with respect to items of income or loss described in section 1366 which are attributable to such business, and

''(ii) such shareholder's net earnings from self-employment shall include such shareholder's pro rata share of such items of income or loss, except that in computing such pro rata share of such items the exceptions provided in subsection (a) shall apply.

''(B) TREATMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS.—Except as otherwise provided by the Secretary, the applicable shareholder's pro rata share of items referred to in subparagraph (A) shall be increased by the pro rata share of such items of each member of such applicable shareholder's family (within the meaning of section 318(a)(1)) who does not provide substantial services with respect to such professional service business.

''(C) SPECIFIED S CORPORATION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'specified S corporation' means—

''(i) any S corporation which is a partner in a partnership which is engaged in a professional service business if substantially all of the activities of such S corporation are performed in connection with such partnership, and

''(ii) any other S corporation which is engaged in a professional service business if 75 percent or more of the gross income of such business is attributable to service of 3 or fewer shareholders of such corporation.

''(D) APPLICABLE SHAREHOLDER.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'applicable shareholder' means any shareholder whose modified adjusted gross income for the taxable year exceeds—

''(i) in the case of a shareholder making a joint return under section 6013 or a surviving spouse (as defined in section 2(a)), $250,000,

''(ii) in the case of a married shareholder (as defined in section 7703) filing a separate return, half of the dollar amount determined under clause (i), and

''(iii) in any other case, $200,000.

''(2) PARTNERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any partnership which is engaged in a professional service business, subsection (a)(13) shall not apply to any applicable partner who provides substantial services with respect to such professional service business.

''(B) APPLICABLE PARTNER.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'applicable partner' means any partner whose modified adjusted gross income for the taxable year exceeds—

''(i) in the case of a partner making a joint return under section 6013 or a surviving spouse (as defined in section 2(a)), $250,000,

''(ii) in the case of a married partner (as defined in section 7703) filing a separate return, half of the dollar amount determined under clause (i), and

''(iii) in any other case, $200,000.

''(3) PROFESSIONAL SERVICE BUSINESS.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'professional service business' means any trade or business (or portion thereof) providing services in the fields of health, law, lobbying, engineering, architecture, accounting, actuarial science, performing arts, consulting, athletics, investment advice or management, or brokerage services.

''(4) MODIFIED ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'modified adjusted gross income' means adjusted gross income—

''(A) determined without regard to any deduction allowed under section 164(f), and

''(B) increased by the amount excluded from gross income under section 911(a)(1).

''(5) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this subsection, including regulations which prevent the avoidance of the purposes of this subsection through tiered entities or otherwise.

''(6) CROSS REFERENCE.—For employment tax treatment of wages paid to shareholders of S corporations, see subtitle C.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 211 of the Social Security Act is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(l) SPECIAL RULES FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICE BUSINESSES.—

''(1) SHAREHOLDERS PROVIDING SERVICES TO SPECIFIED S CORPORATIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an applicable shareholder who provides substantial services with respect to a professional service business referred to in subparagraph (C) of a specified S corporation—

''(i) such shareholder shall be treated as engaged in the trade or business of such professional service business with respect to items of income or loss described in section 1366 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which are attributable to such business, and

''(ii) such shareholder's net earnings from self-employment shall include such shareholder's pro rata share of such items of income or loss, except that in computing such pro rata share of such items the exceptions provided in subsection (a) shall apply.

''(B) TREATMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS.—Except as otherwise provided by the Secretary of the Treasury, the applicable shareholder's pro rata share of items referred to in subparagraph (A) shall be increased by the pro rata share of such items of each member of such applicable shareholder's family (within the meaning of section 318(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) who does not provide substantial services with respect to such professional service business.

''(C) SPECIFIED S CORPORATION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'specified S corporation' means—

''(i) any S corporation (as defined in section 1361(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) which is a partner in a partnership which is engaged in a professional service business if substantially all of the activities of such S corporation are performed in connection with such partnership, and

''(ii) any other S corporation (as so defined) which is engaged in a professional service business if 75 percent or more of the gross income of such business is attributable to service of 3 or fewer shareholders of such corporation.

''(D) APPLICABLE SHAREHOLDER.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'applicable shareholder' means any shareholder whose modified adjusted gross income for the taxable year exceeds—

''(i) in the case of a shareholder making a joint return under section 6013 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or a surviving spouse (as defined in section 2(a) of such Code), $250,000,

''(ii) in the case of a married shareholder (as defined in section 7703 of such Code) filing a separate return, half of the dollar amount determined under clause (i), and

''(iii) in any other case, $200,000.

''(2) PARTNERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any partnership which is engaged in a professional service business, subsection (a)(12) shall not apply to any applicable partner who provides substantial services with respect to such professional service business.

''(B) APPLICABLE PARTNER.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'applicable partner' means any partner whose modified adjusted gross income for the taxable year exceeds—

''(i) in the case of a partner making a joint return under section 6013 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or a surviving spouse (as defined in section 2(a) of such Code), $250,000,

''(ii) in the case of a married partner (as defined in section 7703 of such Code) filing a separate return, half of the dollar amount determined under clause (i), and

''(iii) in any other case, $200,000.

''(3) PROFESSIONAL SERVICE BUSINESS.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'professional service business' means any trade or business (or portion thereof) providing services in the fields of health, law, lobbying, engineering, architecture, accounting, actuarial science, performing arts, consulting, athletics, investment advice or management, or brokerage services.

''(4) MODIFIED ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'modified adjusted gross income' means adjusted gross income as determined under section 62 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986—

''(A) determined without regard to any deduction allowed under section 164(f) of such Code, and

''(B) increased by the amount excluded from gross income under section 911(a)(1) of such Code.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2012.

SEC. 4. COMPLIANCE PROVISION.

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.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 432—DESIGNATING APRIL 30, 2012, AS ''DIA DE LOS NINOS: CELEBRATING YOUNG AMERICANS''

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. REID of Nevada, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. LAUTENBERG) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 432

Whereas many nations throughout the world, and especially within the Western hemisphere, celebrate ''Día de los Niños'', or ''Day of the Children'', on the 30th of April, in recognition and celebration of their country's future—their children;

Whereas children represent the hopes and dreams of the people of the United States and children are the center of families in the United States;

Whereas the people of the United States should nurture and invest in children to preserve and enhance economic prosperity, democracy, and the American spirit;

Whereas according to the 2010 Census report, there are more than 50,000,000 individuals of Hispanic descent living in the United States, more than 17,000,000 of those are children;

Whereas Hispanics in the United States, the youngest and fastest growing ethnic community in the Nation, continue the tradition of honoring their children on Día de los Niños, and wish to share this custom with the rest of the Nation;

Whereas the primary teachers of family values, morality, and culture are parents and family members, and we rely on children to pass on family values, morals, and culture to future generations;

Whereas the importance of literacy and education are most often communicated to children through family members;

Whereas families should be encouraged to engage in family and community activities that include extended and elderly family members, and that encourage children to explore and develop confidence;

Whereas the designation of a day to honor the children of the United States will help affirm for the people of the United States the significance of family, education, and community;

Whereas the designation of a day of special recognition for the children of the United States will provide an opportunity for children to reflect on their future, to articulate their aspirations, and to find comfort and security in the support of their family members and communities;

Whereas the National Latino Children's Institute, serving as a voice for children, has worked with cities throughout the Nation to declare April 30, 2012, to be ''Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans'', a day to bring together Hispanics and other communities nationwide to celebrate and uplift children; and

Whereas the children of a nation are the responsibility of all of its people, and people should be encouraged to celebrate the gifts of children to society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 30, 2012, as ''Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans''; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to join with all children, families, organizations, communities, churches, cities, and States across the Nation to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies, including activities that—

(A) center around children, and are free or minimal in cost so as to encourage and facilitate the participation of all people;

(B) are positive and uplifting, and help children express their hopes and dreams;

(C) provide opportunities for children of all backgrounds to learn about one another's cultures and to share ideas;

(D) include all members of the family, especially extended and elderly family members, so as to promote greater communication among the generations within a family, enabling children to appreciate and benefit from the experiences and wisdom of their elderly family members;

(E) provide opportunities for families within a community to get acquainted; and

(F) provide children with the support they need to develop skills and confidence, and to find the inner strength and the will and fire of the human spirit to make their dreams come true.

SENATE RESOLUTION 433—DESIGNATING APRIL 2012 AS ''NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH''

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

S. RES. 433

Whereas in 2010, approximately 695,000 children were determined to be victims of abuse or neglect;

Whereas in 2010, more than 1,530 children died as a result of abuse or neglect;

Whereas in 2010, an estimated 79.4 percent of the children who died due to abuse or neglect were under the age of 4;

Whereas in 2010, of the children under the age of 4 who died due to abuse or neglect, 47.7 percent were under the age of 1;

Whereas abused or neglected children have a higher risk for developing health problems in adulthood, including alcoholism, depression, drug abuse, eating disorders, obesity, suicide, and certain chronic diseases;

Whereas a National Institute of Justice study indicated that abused or neglected children—

(1) are 11 times more likely to be arrested for criminal behavior as juveniles; and

(2) are 2.7 times more likely to be arrested for violent and criminal behavior as adults;

Whereas an estimated one-third of abused or neglected children grow up to abuse or neglect their own children;

Whereas providing community-based services to families impacted by child abuse or neglect may be far less costly than—

(1) the emotional and physical damage inflicted on children who have been abused or neglected;

(2) providing other services to abused or neglected children, including child protective, law enforcement, court, foster care, or health care services; or

(3) providing treatment to adults recovering from child abuse; and

Whereas child abuse and neglect have long-term economic and societal costs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2012 as ''National Child Abuse Prevention Month'';

(2) recognizes and applauds the national and community organizations that work to promote awareness about child abuse and neglect, including by identifying risk factors and developing prevention strategies;

(3) supports the proclamation issued by President Obama declaring April 2012 to be ''National Child Abuse Prevention Month''; and

(4) should increase public awareness of prevention programs relating to child abuse and neglect, and continue to work with States to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 434—SUPPORTING THE GOAL OF PREVENTING AND EFFECTIVELY TREATING ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE BY THE YEAR 2025, AS ARTICULATED IN THE DRAFT NATIONAL PLAN TO ADDRESS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Mr. WARNER (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. CONRAD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 434

Whereas Alzheimer's disease is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States;

Whereas Alzheimer's disease is the only disease among the 10 leading causes of death in the United States that lacks a means of prevention or a cure, and the progression of which cannot be slowed;

Whereas more than 5,000,000 people in the United States suffer from Alzheimer's disease;

Whereas, in 2011, 15,200,000 family members and friends provided 17,400,000,000 hours of unpaid care valued at $210,500,000,000 to patients with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias;

Whereas, by the year 2050, as many as 15,000,000 people in the United States will have Alzheimer's disease if scientists do not make progress in the prevention or treatment of the disease;

Whereas the Federal Government spent an estimated $140,000,000,000 under the Medicare and Medicaid programs to care for patients with Alzheimer's disease in 2011;

Whereas spending relating to the treatment of Alzheimer's disease under the Medicare and Medicaid programs is projected to be more than $850,000,000,000 per year, in 2012 dollars, by the year 2050;

Whereas scientists working to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease have already identified—

(1) more than 100 genes linked to Alzheimer's disease;

(2) biomarkers to identify the people who are at risk for Alzheimer's disease; and

(3) other promising leads in gene, protein, and drug therapies to benefit people who have Alzheimer's disease or are at risk for developing the disease;

Whereas an emphasis on early diagnosis, workforce training, education, and support for patients and the families of patients, as well as other programs and initiatives spearheaded by State and local governments, advocacy organizations, doctors, hospitals, and long-term care facilities, are already making a difference in reducing the burden of Alzheimer's disease for patients, families, and communities;

Whereas the National Alzheimer's Project Act (Public Law 111–375; 124 Stat. 4100), which Congress passed unanimously on December 15, 2010 and President Barack Obama signed into law on January 4, 2011, required the Secretary of Health and Human Services to create the first National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease, and established the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services to assist the Secretary of Health and Human Services in this task;

Whereas, shortly after the National Alzheimer's Project Act was enacted, the Department of Health and Human Services created the Interagency Group on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias to inform the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease;

Whereas, in formulating the draft National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Interagency Group on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias, and the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services focused on 3 main topics, long-term services and support, clinical care, and research; and

Whereas the draft National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease includes—

(1) the bold and transformative goal of preventing and treating Alzheimer's disease by the year 2025; and

(2) specific performance metrics to optimize the quality and efficiency of care, expand support for patients and families, enhance public awareness and engagement, track progress, and drive improvement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate That the Senate—

(1) supports the groundbreaking national goal of preventing and treating Alzheimer's disease by the year 2025 and the other goals of the draft National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease;

(2) finds that basic science, medical research, and therapy development, through enhanced research programs and expanded public-private partnerships, are necessary for—

(A) reaching the goal of preventing and treating Alzheimer's disease by the year 2025; and

(B) identifying a definitive cure for Alzheimer's disease;

(3) calls for further public awareness and understanding of Alzheimer's disease;

(4) supports increased assistance for people with Alzheimer's disease and the caregivers and families of those people; and

(5) encourages early diagnosis and access to high-quality care for people with Alzheimer's disease.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 24, 2012, at 10 a.m. to conduct a committee hearing entitled ''The Collapse of MF Global: Lessons Learned and Policy Implications.''

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 24, 2012, at 10 a.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The Committee will hold a hearing entitled, ''The Emergence of Online Video: Is It the Future?''

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 24, 2012, at 10 a.m., in room 215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Anatomy of a Fraud Bust: From Investigation to Conviction.''

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

AFRICAN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

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 April 24, 2012, at 10 a.m., to hold an African Affairs subcommittee hearing entitled, ''U.S. Policy to Counter the Lord's Resistance Army.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES, AND BORDER SECURITY

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and Border Security, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 24, 2012, at 10 a.m., in room SD–G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Examining the Constitutionality and Prudence of State and Local Governments Enforcing Immigration Law.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND WILDLIFE

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 24, 2012, at 10:15 a.m. in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Paul Edenfield a member of my staff, be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's session.

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

DIA DE LOS NINOS: CELEBRATING YOUNG AMERICANS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 432.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 432) designating April 30, 2012, as ''Dia de los Ninos: Celebrating Young Americans.''

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

Mr. REID. 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 related to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 432) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 432

Whereas many nations throughout the world, and especially within the Western hemisphere, celebrate ''Día de los Niños'', or ''Day of the Children'', on the 30th of April, in recognition and celebration of their country's future—their children;

Whereas children represent the hopes and dreams of the people of the United States and children are the center of families in the United States;

Whereas the people of the United States should nurture and invest in children to preserve and enhance economic prosperity, democracy, and the American spirit;

Whereas according to the 2010 Census report, there are more than 50,000,000 individuals of Hispanic descent living in the United States, more than 17,000,000 of those are children;

Whereas Hispanics in the United States, the youngest and fastest growing ethnic community in the Nation, continue the tradition of honoring their children on Día de los Niños, and wish to share this custom with the rest of the Nation;

Whereas the primary teachers of family values, morality, and culture are parents and family members, and we rely on children to pass on family values, morals, and culture to future generations;

Whereas the importance of literacy and education are most often communicated to children through family members;

Whereas families should be encouraged to engage in family and community activities that include extended and elderly family members, and that encourage children to explore and develop confidence;

Whereas the designation of a day to honor the children of the United States will help affirm for the people of the United States the significance of family, education, and community;

Whereas the designation of a day of special recognition for the children of the United States will provide an opportunity for children to reflect on their future, to articulate their aspirations, and to find comfort and security in the support of their family members and communities;

Whereas the National Latino Children's Institute, serving as a voice for children, has worked with cities throughout the Nation to declare April 30, 2012, to be ''Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans'', a day to bring together Hispanics and other communities nationwide to celebrate and uplift children; and

Whereas the children of a nation are the responsibility of all of its people, and people should be encouraged to celebrate the gifts of children to society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 30, 2012, as ''Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans''; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to join with all children, families, organizations, communities, churches, cities, and States across the Nation to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies, including activities that—

(A) center around children, and are free or minimal in cost so as to encourage and facilitate the participation of all people;

(B) are positive and uplifting, and help children express their hopes and dreams;

(C) provide opportunities for children of all backgrounds to learn about one another's cultures and to share ideas;

(D) include all members of the family, especially extended and elderly family members, so as to promote greater communication among the generations within a family, enabling children to appreciate and benefit from the experiences and wisdom of their elderly family members;

(E) provide opportunities for families within a community to get acquainted; and

(F) provide children with the support they need to develop skills and confidence, and to find the inner strength and the will and fire of the human spirit to make their dreams come true.

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that we now proceed to S. Res. 433.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 433) designating April 2012 as ''National Child Abuse Prevention Month.''

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 433) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 433

Whereas in 2010, approximately 695,000 children were determined to be victims of abuse or neglect;

Whereas in 2010, more than 1,530 children died as a result of abuse or neglect;

Whereas in 2010, an estimated 79.4 percent of the children who died due to abuse or neglect were under the age of 4;

Whereas in 2010, of the children under the age of 4 who died due to abuse or neglect, 47.7 percent were under the age of 1;

Whereas abused or neglected children have a higher risk for developing health problems in adulthood, including alcoholism, depression, drug abuse, eating disorders, obesity, suicide, and certain chronic diseases;

Whereas a National Institute of Justice study indicated that abused or neglected children—

(1) are 11 times more likely to be arrested for criminal behavior as juveniles; and

(2) are 2.7 times more likely to be arrested for violent and criminal behavior as adults;

Whereas an estimated one-third of abused or neglected children grow up to abuse or neglect their own children;

Whereas providing community-based services to families impacted by child abuse or neglect may be far less costly than—

(1) the emotional and physical damage inflicted on children who have been abused or neglected;

(2) providing other services to abused or neglected children, including child protective, law enforcement, court, foster care, or health care services; or

(3) providing treatment to adults recovering from child abuse; and

Whereas child abuse and neglect have long-term economic and societal costs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2012 as ''National Child Abuse Prevention Month'';

(2) recognizes and applauds the national and community organizations that work to promote awareness about child abuse and neglect, including by identifying risk factors and developing prevention strategies;

(3) supports the proclamation issued by President Obama declaring April 2012 to be ''National Child Abuse Prevention Month''; and

(4) should increase public awareness of prevention programs relating to child abuse and neglect, and continue to work with States to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect in the United States.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Section 5 of Title I of Division H of Public Law 110–161, appoints the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the U.S.-Japan Interparliamentary Group conference for the 112th Congress: The Honorable LISA MURKOWSKI of Alaska.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 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. 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.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR S. 2343, S. 2334 AND S. 2338

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that S. 2343 and S. 2334, both of which were introduced earlier today, and S. 2338 be considered as having been read twice and placed on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The bills will be placed on the calendar.

ORDERS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until Wednesday, April 25, 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, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1925, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act; and that following the remarks of the two leaders, the time until 2 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first 30 minutes and the majority controlling the final 30 minutes; further, that the Republicans control the time from 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. and the majority control time from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., and that at 2 p.m. the Senate resume consideration of S. 1789, the postal reform bill.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, beginning at 2 p.m. tomorrow there will be probably seven or eight, maybe nine rollcall votes in order to complete the postal reform bill.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:03 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, April 25, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE ACT OF 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4089) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing and shooting:

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Chair, I rise today to express my support for the Sportsmen's Heritage Act, H.R. 4089. This bill would improve access to public lands for our hunters, fishers, and recreationists. By passing H.R. 4089, we will ensure that public lands will continue to be used and enjoyed by sportsmen across the country.

While many of us support H.R. 4089, I do have reservations about some of the bill's details. Specifically, titles I and II of this bill require new procedures for approved closures of public lands. Federal land management agencies currently have a process in place for closures that includes public notice, review, and approval at the local, state, or federal level depending on the individual situation. I believe these decisions are best made by local land managers who are uniquely familiar with the lands, the people, and the potential hazards. I am concerned that adding additional closure approval steps by people removed from the local areas will delay, or even discourage, closures that are based on sound science, and for the safety of the people and protection of the environment.

I also believe that hunting, fishing, and recreation are often compatible with the goals of public lands, including wilderness designation. However, there are some activities that are not. Oil and gas development, mining, logging, and motorized vehicle use outside of designated areas counter the goals of current wilderness management. In addition, these activities also run counter to the intent of H.R. 4089 by further restricting sportsmen's access. These restrictions on activities in Wilderness Areas should be explicitly stated in the bill and should not leave any room for misinterpretation.

Finally, I am discouraged to see the incorporation of an amendment to H.R. 4089 that would undermine the ability of the President to designate National Monuments under the Antiquities Act. This is a process that has protected some of our most precious national treasures and cultural heritage sites. I agree that local support should be weighed heavily when considering National Monument designations, but additional legislative road blocks are unnecessary.

I commend my colleagues in the House for supporting sportsmen's access to public lands, and I hope to see their enjoyment continue in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. We need to keep public lands open when feasible, while also allowing for closures in a timely manner if it is in the best interest of public safety or environmental protection. I look forward to working with our Senate colleagues to make sure these concerns are addressed as H.R. 4089 moves forward.

COASTAL KIDS PRESCHOOL

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize an incredible community effort in Maine at the Coastal Kids Preschool in Damariscotta.

The program at Coastal Kids began in 1995, and has since become a community staple, welcoming any child regardless of income or special needs.

Their hard work and dedication to quality and equitable education has given them a place of honor within the community. Which is why when they had to expand in order to better meet the needs of the community, stakeholders from all over the mid-coast came together.

On April 23, 2012, the Coastal Kids Preschool will formally unveil their new facility. With the help of many businesses and USDA Rural Development, an opportunity for a head start in life has been afforded to more children. I applaud this effort and wish the teachers, students, and parents all the best in their new home.

HONORING KAYLA COX

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great Nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share these with my House colleagues.

Kayla Cox is a senior at Clear Springs High School in Galveston County, Texas. Her essay topic is: In your opinion, why is it important to be involved in the political process?

The definition of democracy is a government by the people with the component of majority rules. The United States of America has an altered version of democracy known as a representative democracy. The model according to which our government functions allows the opportunity to be as close to a democratic government as possible with such a large population. Many question what the importance is in being involved in the political process. Being an active participant in politics is necessary to protect the interests of this diverse nation and is a demonstration of respect for our country.

America is composed of people from all backgrounds; including ethnicity, economic level, religious, and moral. Each person forms their opinions based on their previous experiences. This diversity and privilege to form our own opinions is a core value of our nation. If people were to choose not to express their opinions, whether it be through voting or various other means, then policies would not be as diverse. The government would start to represent the minority of the population, and would be run by the people for which that minority voted.

The United States was built upon the belief that people should have certain freedoms that cannot be taken away. Many individuals and groups have worked vigorously to mold our country into the desirable place it is today, and to extend those rights to more of the American population. In addition, they have worked to influence the extension of those rights to foreign countries. Americans have sacrificed their lives to give us the life of freedom we enjoy today. Participation in politics has shaped policies that, in turn, have improved the lives of fellow Americans. This participation can take many forms ranging from something as simple as making an issue known to coordinating with other people to directly influence elected representatives.

Although some people may believe that they cannot make a difference by voting or raising awareness on an issue, the proof that they can lies in the stories of the one's who did. Political Participation is vital to the policymaking process because the voices of the American people matter, and they are the key to maintaining this country's standards that have been set by those before us.

OBSERVING WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with immense respect that I rise today in remembrance of the many men and women who have lost their lives in the workplace and to honor those who have fought tirelessly to improve conditions for workers throughout the United States. On April 28, 2012, the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL–CIO) and union members nationwide will once again gather in various locations in observance of Workers Memorial Day. The great men and women of America's unions will pause to pay tribute to the many workers whose lives have been lost, and the millions who have become ill, due to accidents and unsafe conditions in the workplace. They will also reinforce their commitment to improving conditions for future generations to come.

In the United States today, an average of twelve men and women per day go to work and never make it home to their families, having lost their lives due to an accident in the workplace. Unfortunately, many of these accidents could have been prevented. Under outstanding leaders such as AFL–CIO President Richard Trumka, Indiana AFL–CIO President Nancy Guyott, and Northwest Indiana Federation of Labor President Dan Murchek, AFL–CIO union members have continued the flight of their predecessors to ensure that the lives lost were not in vain.

Since the passage of the landmark Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), the unions of the AFL–CIO have been instrumental in a movement toward the Act's goal that all American workers would have the right to a safe workplace. The AFL–CIO and its unions are to be commended for their contributions to the passage of OSHA and many of the subsequent laws and regulations involving workplace safety. It is because of the organization and demands of labor unions that employers and the government have acted to improve the quality of life of the American workforce.

In Northwest Indiana, the steel industry has played a vital role in supporting our local communities and stimulating the economy. On April 26, 2012, in accordance with Workers Memorial Day, United Steelworkers members will pay a special tribute to their fallen comrades whose lives have been cut short in the workplace. These fine men and women will forever be remembered by their devoted colleagues and a grateful community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in observance of Workers Memorial Day, and in remembering the many workers who have lost their lives on the job, while honoring the hardworking, loyal men and women of America's unions who have taken up the struggle to improve safety conditions in the workplace. The great men and women of our unions are the finest representation of America's workforce, and I am proud to represent the many dedicated men and women of labor unions throughout Northwest Indiana. Their unwavering commitment to their fellow workers is to be admired.

CONGRATULATING MARK DAHLBERG FROM THE VILLAGE OF GRANTSBURG ON HIS RETIREMENT AFTER 43 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the honorable contributions made by Mr. Mark Dahlberg, a retired Trustee for the Village of Grantsburg, Wisconsin.

Mr. Dahlberg has served the public at the local government level for a total of 43 years—as Village President (1995–2009), and twice as a Trustee (1969–1995, 2009–2012).

During his time in office, the small northwestern Wisconsin Village of Grantsburg has seen unprecedented economic growth. Today, this town is considered to be the main manufacturing hub in Burnett County. With Mr. Dahlberg's facilitation, tax increment financing and the expansion of water services became effective instruments allowing local industries to grow and expand. Mr. Dahlberg's top priority had always been increasing economic development and job creation in Grantsburg.

These accomplishments made by Mr. Dahlberg in Grantsburg illustrate an ideal relationship between the public and private sector. He has shown that government can work with business to create the environment necessary for sustained economic growth and development, even during difficult economic times.

I commend and thank Mr. Dahlberg for all of the years he has served the public, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending best wishes to him on the occasion of his retirement.

COMMEMORATING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the victims and survivors of one of the darkest chapters in human history, the Armenian Genocide. Today, April 24, marks the 97th commemoration of the first genocide of the 20th Century where Ottoman Turkish authorities ordered the systematic annihilation of more than 1.5 million Armenians. The Armenian Genocide was carried out from 1915 to 1923 through massacres, deportations, and death marches where hundreds of thousands were herded into the Syrian Desert to die of thirst and starvation. Sadly, to this day this chapter of history has yet to be admitted by the Government of Turkey.

Many international observers, including then Ambassador and later U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, witnessed the nightmare firsthand and reported detailed accounts of the atrocities to their governments. Respected organizations and eminent scholars and historians agree and recognize the Armenian Genocide, including the Elie Wiesél Foundation for Humanity and the renowned International Association of Genocide Scholars. Their judgments are supported by 53 Nobel laureates who signed an open letter to the Government of Turkey on April 9, 2007. I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD a listing of those Nobel laureates.

Mr. Speaker, the historical record is clear and the Armenian Genocide is a tragic fact. It must be acknowledged and remembered so that it will never be repeated.

As a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, I know that the refusal of modern-day Turkey to acknowledge one of the worst examples of man's inhumanity in the 20th Century haunts survivors of the Armenian Genocide, as well as their families. As a Member of Congress from California, which is home to more Armenian-Americans than any other state, I believe this is not only an affront to the memory of the victims and to their descendants, but it does a disservice to the United States as it seeks to stand up for the victims of violence today.

The issue of recognizing the Armenian genocide and helping the Armenian people is neither a partisan nor geopolitical issue. Rather, it is a question of giving the Armenian people the justice they deserve. In doing so, we affirm the dignity of humankind everywhere.

It has been said that "all it takes for evil to triumph, is for good men to do nothing." This is one of the reasons I am proud to have joined with so many of my colleagues in cosponsoring the resolution affirming the occurrence of the Armenian genocide throughout my career in Congress. I will continue to do for as long as it takes.

In recognizing the Armenian Genocide we do not seek to persecute any person or state; we seek to build a path that will lead to reconciliation between Armenians and Turks. And in doing so, we will remain true to our nation's highest aspirations for justice and peace. It was President Lincoln who called upon the "better angels of our nature" when he said in his Second Inaugural Address that all Americans should "do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Mr. Speaker, the Armenian Genocide has been officially recognized by 42 states. These States have gone on public record rejecting any claim or assertion that denies the occurrence of one of history's worst crimes against humanity. I believe it is time for us to join these nations in that endeavor by passing H. Res. 304, the "Affirmation of the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide Resolution."

Mr. Speaker, I ask for a moment of silence in memory of the millions of silenced voices and interrupted lives of those Armenians who perished between 1915 and 1923 in the genocide committed by the Ottoman Empire.

LIST OF 53 NOBEL LAUREATES URGING THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT TO ACKNOWLEDGE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Peter Agre, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2003); Sidney Altman, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1989); Philip W. Anderson, Nobel Prize, Physics (1977); Kenneth J. Arrow, Nobel Prize, Economics (1972); Richard Axel, Nobel Prize, Medicine (2004); Baruj Benacerraf, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1980); Gunter Blobel, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1999); Georges Charpak, Nobel Prize, Physics (1992); Steven Chu, Nobel Prize, Physics (1997); J.M. Coetzee, Nobel Prize, Literature (2003); Claude Cohen-Tannoudji, Nobel Prize, Physics (1997); Mairead Corrigan Maguire, Nobel Prize, Peace (1976); Robert F. Curl, Jr., Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1996); Paul J. Crutzen, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1995).

Frederik W. de Klerk, Nobel Prize, Peace (1993); Johann Deisenhofer, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1998); John B. Fenn, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2002); Val Fitch, Nobel Prize, Physics (1980); Jerome I. Friedman, Nobel Prize, Physics (1990); Donald A. Glaser, Nobel Prize, Physics (1960); Sheldon Glashow, Nobel Prize, Physics (1979); Roy J. Glauber, Nobel Prize, Physics (2005); Clive W.J. Granger, Nobel Prize, Economics (2003); Paul Greengard, Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000); David J. Gross, Nobel Prize, Physics (2004); Roger Guillemin, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1977); Dudley R. Herschbach, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1986).

Avram Hershko, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2004); Roald Hoffman, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1981); Daniel Kahneman, Nobel Prize, Economics (2002); Eric R. Kandel, Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000); Aaron Klug, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1982); Edwin G. Krebs, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1992); Sir Harold W. Kroto, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1996); Finn E. Kydland, Nobel Prize, Economics (2004); Leon M. Lederman, Nobel Prize, Physics (1988); Anthony J. Leggett, Nobel Prize, Physics (2003); Rudolph A. Marcus, Nobel Prize,

Chemistry (1992); Daniel L. McFadden, Nobel Prize, Economics (2000); Craig C. Mello, Nobel Prize, Medicine (2006).

Robert C. Merton, Nobel Prize, Economics (1997); Marshall W. Nirenberg, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1968); Sir Paul Nurse, Nobel Prize, Medicine (2001); Douglas D. Osheroff, Nobel Prize, Physics (1996); Martin L. Perl, Nobel Prize, Physics (1995); John C. Polanyi, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1986); Stanley Prusiner, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1997); José Ramos-Horta, Nobel Prize, Peace (1996); Richard J. Roberts, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1993); Wole Soyinka, Nobel Prize, Literature (1986); Elie Wiesel, Nobel Prize, Peace (1986); Betty Williams, Nobel Prize, Peace (1976); Kurt Wüthrich, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2002).

TRIBUTE TO MS. MARCI McCARTHY

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Whereas, the public safety of our citizens is the foremost priority of our government; and

Whereas, Ms. Marci McCarthy has given and continues to give exceptionable and distinguished service by providing guidance, protection and leadership in protecting our public and private sectors in cyberspace; and

Whereas, Ms. McCarthy gives of herself to insure that our Nation can foster greater professionalism in the Information Security Industry; and

Whereas, the issue of cybercrimes is of historical importance, and the work of Ms. McCarthy enhances the efforts of our homeland security and local law enforcement agencies; and

Whereas, Ms. McCarthy gives of herself daily without any need for praise and fame, while serving valiantly and making us proud; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Ms. Marci McCarthy for her leadership and service to our District and the Nation;

Now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., do hereby proclaim March 13, 2012 as Ms. Marci McCarthy Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 13th day of March, 2012.

COMMEMORATING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, today, we gather to remember the genocide against the Armenian people. Although the generation that experienced these atrocities has passed, their suffering has been prolonged by the continued efforts to silence their cries and deny that a genocide occurred.

When words can help bring comfort to those who suffer, silence isolates and inflicts pain. When time marches forward and history becomes more distant, silence erodes the memory of those who were lost. When affirmation and recognition could prevent such a tragedy from being repeated, silence allows the perpetrators of genocide to assume their actions will meet neither obstacle nor objection. Thus, the ongoing efforts of the Turkish leadership to silence discussion of the Armenian genocide inflict yet another cruelty.

We owe it to the victims of the Armenian genocide, the survivors and their descendants to resist such censorship. That is why I am an original cosponsor of H. Res. 304, a resolution to reaffirm the United States historical record on the Armenian genocide and our own government's bold role protesting the atrocities as they unfolded.

Genocide is not a unique feature of the 20th century, a momentary aberration of human morality. Genocides have continued to occur in the 21st century, and today, we are reminded of our moral obligation to speak out and take action to stop such atrocities and the immense repercussions of our choices.

Today, we will not be silent.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JANIE BELL WILSON STEWART

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Mrs. Janie Bell Wilson Stewart, who passed away recently at the age of 76. As an educator, loving mother and wife, and faithful member of her church, Mrs. Stewart was an exemplary member of her community. I would like to take this time to express my deepest condolences to everyone who knew Mrs. Stewart, especially her family and friends.

Mrs. Stewart was born on April 15, 1935 in Wayneshoro, Georgia. Six years later, she moved to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, attending Walker Elementary School of Broward County Public Schools. A vivacious student, Mrs. Stewart was the first to receive a scholarship from the Zheta Rho Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. This scholarship paved the way for her to attend Florida Memorial University, then called Florida Normal College, where she graduated in 1958 with a degree in Education and later became a teacher.

While in college, Mrs. Stewart gave back to her community through her work with the Zeta Rho Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and continued her alliance with her sorority well after she graduated, becoming a golden soror for her service of over 50 years to the organization. This dedication to her sorority and alma mater earned her the Fountain of Excellence Award from Florida Memorial College (University) decades after she graduated.

It was also during college that Janie met her future husband, Milton Stewart, to whom she was married for 48 years. Together, they raised a son and one of their nieces, whom they treated as their own daughter. As a teacher, Mrs. Stewart helped countless children. Her devotion for both her students and career was evident in her long workdays, recognitions for her exceptional teaching, and friendships with other educators.

Always passionate about knowledge, Mrs. Stewart received her Master's in Administration and Supervision from Nova Southeastern University while holding a job as a teacher. With her graduate degree, Mrs. Stewart went on to become a principal. She served dutifully in this role at three different Broward County elementary schools. Mrs. Stewart continued to serve as a mentor for other teachers and maintained a presence in her former students' lives even after her retirement. Her thirty three-year career as a teacher and principal touched the lives of innumerable children and colleagues in South Florida.

Aside from her family, career, and sorority, Mrs. Stewart was also devoted to her faith. She was a member of First Baptist Church Piney Grove for 69 years, having joined in 1943. There, she served as the Director of the Red Circle of the Society of Missions. Even with her numerous activities, Mrs. Stewart still found time for fun. She enjoyed golfing and received the Palmview Women's Golfing award in 1979.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to pay tribute to Mrs. Janie Bell Wilson Stewart whose commitment to education, her students, family, and the community will be truly missed. My thoughts and prayers are with Mrs. Stewart's family during this most difficult time.

IN RECOGNITION OF LINDA S. LANGE FOR HER OUTSTANDING CIVILIAN SERVICE AWARD NOMINATION

HON. STEVE AUSTRIA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Linda S. Lange. I am honored to recognize Ms. Lange for her Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award nomination. Ms. Lange was nominated for her service as a civil service employee with the United States Air Force, Business Operations Division, 711th Human Performance Wing, Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC), Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, from 15 December 1975 to 30 April 2012.

During her 37 years of federal service, Ms. Lange displayed superior performance with her loyalty and commitment to the mission at hand. During her tenure in the AFRL, Ms. Lange was given high visibility jobs such as leading Inspector General Unit Compliant Inspections, directing all logistical and protocol functions for the Scientific Advisory Board reviews, and coordinating and managing all activities for the $293M BRAC MILCON ribbon cutting. Her involvement in this level of activities demonstrates the confidence her leadership had in her ability to perform independently and to meet all expectations.

Ms. Lange's expertise and experience are truly noteworthy and will be greatly missed. Her outstanding performance culminates a long and distinguished career that reflects her commitment and service to our community and nation.

Thus, with great pride, I recognize Linda S. Lange for her long-term commitment to the United States Air Force and I would like to extend best wishes for the future.

MARKING TWENTY YEARS SINCE THE START OF THE BOSNIAN CONFLICT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this month marks 20 years since the start of the tragic conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In remembrance, 11,541 red chairs lined the main street of Sarajevo during the first week of April, one for every man, woman and child killed in the beautiful Bosnian capital of Sarajevo when it was a city under siege by militant Serb forces in the surrounding suburbs and hillsides.

Like the memorial in Srebrenica commemorating the genocide three years later in which 8,000 people, mostly men and boys, were slaughtered by forces under the same overall command, the chairs were a sober reminder of how horrific and senseless the violence in Bosnia truly was. They are also a reminder of the international community's complicity in these crimes by its own inaction, when it had the means to intervene and save lives.

The result of the delayed response to aggression against Bosnia plagues the people of that country today. The realities of the conflict, including the ethnic cleansing, were accommodated by compromises in the Dayton Agreement needed to restore peace. While necessary then, today these compromises have allowed political leaders like Milorad Dodik in the entity of Republika Srpska to block at will progress on reforms needed for the county's stability, prosperity and integration. While I welcome positive developments which have taken place in Bosnia in recent months, above all the formation of a new government, it remains disappointing that movement forward is so painfully slow. The people of Bosnia, regardless of their ethnicity, certainly deserve better.

Today those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide continue to be prosecuted at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, located in The Hague, or in the war crimes courts of the countries concerned. This effort is important and warrants international support until the last crime is prosecuted.

Justice alone, however, cannot bring closure to Bosnia's war victims. That is why I introduced a few weeks ago H.R. 4344, which among other actions supports the work of the International Commission for Missing Persons in locating and identifying persons missing as a result of conflicts and supporting the investigation of genocide and mass atrocities. It is also why I now repeat my call made last year for a permanent memorial to be established at the site of the Omarska concentration camp in northeastern Bosnia, so that the survivors of the crimes associated with the ethnic cleansing of that region of the country may also have a place to remember those lost. Such memorials also serve as bulwarks against forces which try to excuse, minimize and even deny the crimes that took place.

As Chairman or Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Commission for most of the 20 years since the Bosnian conflict erupted, I have chaired dozens of hearings and introduced numerous pieces of legislation which have helped to document the atrocities, shape policy responses, and assist in post-conflict recovery. I have also visited the country on numerous occasions. I can assure the people of Bosnia that I and my colleagues on the Helsinki Commission will continue to work for their human rights and the democratic, prosperous future they deserve.

CROSS WALK COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOOD PANTRY

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize an incredible effort in Maine, the Cross Walk Community Outreach Food Pantry in Naples.

In a time of such need the Cross Walk Community Outreach Food Pantry has been tireless in its efforts to help its neighbors in Western Cumberland County. Twice a month they gather to help residents in the towns of Naples, Sebago, Casco, Bridgton and Harrison with free meals and food boxes. They do this not with a large budget, but with a very dedicated set of volunteers.

Maine is a state that has struggled with food insecurity and the Cross Walk Community Outreach Food Pantry is making a small step in eradicating hunger in Maine. Neighborhood efforts like this demonstrate Maine's unbreakable community bond in our fight against hunger in Maine today.

CONGRATULATING JEAN RONNING OF ASHLAND, WISCONSIN, ON BEING NAMED THE 2012 PERSON OF THE YEAR BY THE ASHLAND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the community accomplishments of Jean Ronning of Ashland, Wisconsin, who has been named the 2012 Person of the Year, by the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce. Jean and her husband, Eugene, have owned and operated the Neighborly Bar for over 28 years.

Mrs. Jean Ronning is well known throughout Ashland as an active member in the community and served in many different roles including: President of the Ashland Softball League, and the Ashland Volleyball League; coordinator for events in Ashland such as the King of the Bay Snowmobile Drag Races, the Green Bay Packer Parade, the Ice Fishing Contest; and hostess for benefits at the New Day Shelter, the BRICK Food Shelf, the Ashland Snowmobile Club, and the Relay For Life Cancer Fundraiser. Additionally, Jean is the recipient of the 2010 New Day Shelter's Passageways to Peace Award.

Overall, Jean is well known for her honorable service to aid those in need by genuinely providing emotional and financial support within the Ashland Community. Her savvy business skills, outgoing personality, and sense for leadership have allowed her to develop a volunteer support network that helps spearhead community initiatives.

Thanks to the community contributions of outstanding citizens like Jean Ronning, Ashland is rightfully known by many as ''Lake Superior's hometown''. I ask that my colleagues join me today to express our appreciation for Jean's community leadership and congratulations for receiving Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce's 2012 Person of the Year award.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. AMELITO ENRIQUEZ

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Amelito Enriquez who has received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring. Dr. Enriquez, a Professor of Engineering and Mathematics at Cañada College in Redwood City, California, is one of nine individuals to receive this prestigious award and he will serve as a resource for federal efforts to develop the national Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education and research sector.

During his 17 years at Cañada College, Dr. Enriquez—or Dr. E as his students like to call him—has demonstrated his commitment to increased participation and success of minorities and women in science, mathematics and engineering.

He has secured over $10 million in federal and state grants to develop programs such as COMETS, Creating Opportunities for Minorities in Engineering, Technology and Science. COMETS allows students from two-year colleges in San Mateo County to intern at the NASA Ames Research Center for a year and prepares them to be competitive once they transfer to a four-year college.

The Summer Engineering Institute is a two-week program at San Francisco State University for high school students interested in engineering and for community college students already studying engineering who hope to transfer to a four-year college to finish their degrees. The Bridge to Engineering for Veterans program helps veterans to transition from military to engineering careers.

The students of Dr. Enriquez adore him because he is making a difference in their lives. They wrote the letters of support that led to his nomination for the presidential honor. Dr. E understands the importance of encouragement and mentorship. He grew up in the Philippines with what he calls a ''me-too complex.'' As the youngest son, he wanted to be whatever his older siblings or cousins wanted to be, but they told him he couldn't. He recalls thinking that the more people were saying that he couldn't do something, the more he wanted to do it.

Dr. Enriquez wanted to be a priest, a basketball player, but eventually found his calling when he studied Engineering at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City. He earned his B.S. in Geodetic Engineering in 1984. After a six-month stint with a large company, he started his own business with friends, taught at his alma mater and then

moved to the United States. He received his M.S. in Geodetic Science from Ohio State University, Columbus in 1989 and his Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California, Irvine in 1994.

While looking for teaching positions, Dr. Enriquez discovered the community college system which, he says, appealed to him because the larger universities wanted professors to focus on research while he wanted to focus on teaching. He started teaching at Cañada College in 1994 and almost immediately started securing grants. In his view, bringing in money is just another way to help students succeed.

Dr. Enriquez is the chair elect of the American Society of Engineering Education, Pacific Southwest Section; the vice chair of the American Society of Engineering Education, Two-Year College Division; and a member of both the California Engineering Liaison Council and the California Mathematics Council Community Colleges.

He has received numerous best paper awards from the American Society of Engineering Education, the Hewlett-Packard Excellence in Technology for Teaching Award and the League of California Community Colleges Out-Of-The-Box Thinkers Award, among others.

When Dr. E is not mentoring students and inventing programs, he enjoys music, weight lifting, hiking, and reading.

He and his spouse David Childers live in San Francisco.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this body to rise with me to honor Dr. Amelito Enriquez, an exceptional teacher, mentor, and engineer who has opened the hearts and minds of thousands of students to the world of science, math, and engineering.

HONORING IRENE COFIE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share these with my House colleagues.

Irene Cofie is a senior at Dawson High School in Brazoria County, Texas. Her essay topic is: In your opinion, what role should government play in our lives?

A JUST OVERSEER

Every man needs a leader: a mentor who will regulate that person's decisions while also serving as an overseer by making sure every decision formulated by the individual is civil and doesn't hold the potential to cause mayhem. In this sense, we as men, have the government as our leader to verify that the decisions we take are astute and will not result in culpable consequences for the majority. Thus, a government's ideal role can best be described as an equitable overseer of men.

As an overseer, a government should remain open-minded to its citizens' desires and rights. Many governments follow a precept, in hopes of maintaining consistency in laws and regulations within their nation. This precept also limits a government's susceptibility to popular demands that are irrational. For example, in America, our government acts on the precept of securing freedom and civil liberties to its citizens, as established by the United States Constitution. Yet, even though the government of America vigilantly manages citizens' affairs through laws, the American government doesn't aggrandize its power over Americans through cruel tactics. However, in many communist countries, the government enjoins its citizens to do exactly as they command and as a result, many citizens of such nations lack the natural rights they deserve. Therefore, even though the role of a government is to serve as an overseer to its people through laws and rules, it is highly important for a government to not be straitlaced in its governing style. A government should instead regulate the masses to make sure that chaos doesn't erupt, while still granting citizens their natural liberties.

Governments' main concern should be providing a safe environment for citizens while assuring that citizens' freedoms are protected and mandated appropriately; thus, freedoms given to one will not counter the civil rights of another. Even though it is up to government to oversee the protection of the masses, citizens primarily have a higher influence in governing their own actions. As a result, citizens should act to control their behavior in society, instead of receiving condemnation by government in order to enable them to live virtuously. In other words, citizens do not need a ''big brother'' government to certify that they do not abuse drugs or alcohol. Rather, the axiomatic truth stands that citizens of any government are entitled to behave maturely and govern themselves as individuals.

It is common for citizens to complain that the role of government is too big and extensive. Ultimately though, the fault of this conflict belongs to citizens because it is the responsibility of all citizens to take care of themselves through moral reasoning and laudable ethics; we as citizens, should be caretakers of our own distinct lives. In turn, the government can maintain an efficacious nationhood, through enforcement of logical precepts as an overseer of the masses, not necessarily the individual. In conclusion, the government serves as a protectorate of everyone within its country, making sure that peace and order are maintained through laws and regulations, in benefit of the majority.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. In 2010, my colleague, Congressman HONDA, introduced H. Res. 1316 to designate this month as a time to recognize the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the United States. As an original co-sponsor, I reaffirm my commitment to address the concerns and needs of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community.

The 37th Congressional District of California, which I am honored to represent, is home to one of the largest Asian constituencies in the nation, including large communities of Filipinos, Samoans and Cambodians. In fact, my district is home to the largest Cambodian population in the United States and the second largest Cambodian population in the world outside Cambodia. I am proud to be a member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus and represent my constituents' interests. The month of May was chosen to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage for two significant reasons. On May 7, 1843, the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States, and on May 10, 1860, the first transcontinental railroad was completed. The transcontinental railroad transformed our nation and could not have been completed without the inclusion of Chinese immigrants.

Despite the challenges and adversity that Asian Pacific Americans have experienced, many have forged ahead and made significant contributions to this great nation. History was made with the election of President Obama, the first president to have such significant personal ties to the Asian Pacific community. President Obama spent his childhood in Hawaii and Indonesia. Also, one of President Obama's first guests to the Oval Office was the prime minister of Japan, Taro Aso.

This year, the U.S. Census Bureau has released data revealing that the Asian population now represents 6 percent of the total American population. This community has grown faster than any other racial group in the United States at four times the national average. Asian Americans are making significant contributions to the economy and own over 1.5 million businesses, employing 3 million people. The buying power of Asian American communities has also grown dramatically, increasing by 89 percent between 2000 and 2009 from $269 billion to $509 billion.

This month, however, also causes us to reflect on some challenges that remain for Asian Pacific Americans. For instance, immigration and language policies continue to disproportionately affect Asian Americans since they are more likely than any other racial group to be foreign-born. Harsh immigration policies and language barriers, therefore, limit many individuals' ability to integrate into American society and access important services. Along similar lines, Asian Americans are twice as likely as non-Hispanic Whites and African Americans to have not seen a doctor in the past five years, and Asian Americans are also more likely to be uninsured.

Mr. Speaker, this month, it is important to recognize the achievements of this incredibly diverse community while also addressing their policy concerns. Nevertheless, I have much hope for the future because Americans are working together, hand-in-hand, to ensure the equality and advancement not only of their community, but of all communities.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to celebrating the accomplishments of Asian Pacific Americans this year and for years to come.

HONORING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTER OF FRESNO

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno, ICCF, its board of trustees, and members as they celebrate their 10th anniversary. ICCF is a non-profit religious institution in the heart of California's San Joaquin Valley which is dedicated providing spiritual empowerment and support to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Through their work and educational endeavors, ICCF has been an asset to our community and a true reflection of the rich diversity in our nation.

Since its inception, ICCF has promoted instruction and dialogue in hopes of establishing understanding and harmony among persons of all faiths. An active participant and leader in interfaith collaboration, activities, and discussion, ICCF hosts a number of activities and programs designed to fulfill its goals. ICCF has developed diversity training seminars to provide insight into Islam and the local Muslim community. For example, in 2005, after consultation with Fresno Police Chief Jerry Dyer, ICCF began providing diversity training to police officers in an effort to increase awareness and knowledge of cultural differences. In 2007, ICCF, the California Health Department, and the Marin Abused Women's Services Center led two training seminars to discuss and advocate the prevention of domestic violence.

In addition to its cultural diversity training efforts, ICCF has also served our community by providing family support services. In partnership with Child Protective Services, CPS, ICCF has ensured that children who are removed from their homes because of safety concerns are able to maintain their cultural norms and traditional practices.

ICCF has worked tirelessly to improve the well-being of our entire community. They have worked with Fresno's Poverello House, an organization that serves the hungry, homeless, and destitute, to collect food and distribute it at schools and homeless areas. Additionally, they have joined efforts with the Marjaree Mason Center, a widely recognized non-profit center for victims of domestic violence, to educate and empower some of our Valley's most vulnerable residents.

As one of the premier faith and culture centers in Central California, ICCF has welcomed students and faculty from a number of educational institutions, including Fresno State, University of Phoenix, Fresno City College, as well as local school districts. Often, visitors learn about the teachings of Islam, women in Islam, as well as Islamic perspectives in areas related to anthropology, sociology, and economics.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating and recognizing ten years of worship, leadership, and community involvement. The Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno accurately reflects the best of what America has to offer—diversity, understanding, and service.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF WE THE PEOPLE: THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, this year, we celebrate the 25th anniversary of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution. Since We the People began in 1987, more than thirty million high school students and ninety thousand teachers have participated in this valuable program that promotes a deeper understanding of the constitutional principles that shape and guide our nation, and instills a sense of civic responsibility in young people.

We the People is an instructional program that enhances students' understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy. Through the program, students discover the relevance of the Constitution and Bill of Rights in present day terms. The We the People program is directed by the Center for Civic Education and funded by Congress through the Education for Democracy Act. This is a program Congress should continue to support.

Teams qualify for the National Finals by prevailing in their regional or state competitions. The national competition is held through a series of simulated congressional hearings, during which students testify as constitutional experts before panels of judges acting as congressional committees. The program enjoys the active participation of members of Congress, as well as support from educational, professional, business, and community organizations across the nation.

This year, more than fourteen hundred students from every part of our country will take part in the National Finals here in Washington. The competition will test students' knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, showcasing their intelligence, determination, and teamwork.

I want to recognize the 24 exceptionally talented and hard working students from Saipan Southern High School in the Northern Mariana Islands, who return to the Finals as repeat regional champions. They have spent many long hours studying and preparing for the competition. Working together and striving for excellence are defining traits of this team. I congratulate them and their teachers and coaches, and wish them all success in this year's We the People competition.

Let me acknowledge each student by name: Ms. Maria Louise Babriela Atrero; 1Mr. Rufino Aquino, Jr.; Ms. Angelica Awa-Ao; Ms. Akioni Nadine Babauta; Ms. Chelsea Marie Bartolo; Ms. Vanessa Rome Bartolo; Ms. Yunika Mae Biado; Ms. Rachel Nadine Borja; Mr. Don Marshall Davis Cabrera; Ms. Yoon Jae Chung; Ms. Teri-Sue Corpuz; Mr. Derick Dela Cruz; Ms. Jinky Marie Kintaro; Ms. Ji Won Lee; Ms. Allysha Hillary Lloren; Mr. Edward John Manibusan; Ms. Momoko Belle Nishikido; Mr. David Kido Paek; Ms. Rina Park; Mr. Seong Jin Park; Ms. Christine Maebelle Roque; Ms. Christina Marie Sablan; Mr. Mike Aries Vargas; Mr. Keisuke Yoshida.

I would also like to acknowledge the remarkable work and guidance by the team's coordinator Mr. Andrew Golden, coaches Justice John A. Manglona, Deanna Manibusan Manglona, and Charlotte Sanders, student coach Carmen Borja, and Public School System representative Stephen Smith.

HONORING THE GAY AND LESBIAN ACTIVISTS ALLIANCE OF WASHINGTON, DC (GLAA)

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a Washington, DC institution, which I have the distinct honor and pleasure representing in this body, that has been a local leader in the struggle for equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, LGBT, people: the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC, GLAA.

GLAA has, since its founding in April 1971, remained a respected and tireless advocate for political freedom for the District of Columbia and for equal rights for its residents.

GLAA continues in the vanguard of efforts to strengthen enforcement of DC's landmark Human Rights Act of 1977.

GLAA, by working with coalition partners, DC officials and the wider public, implemented a well-crafted plan of grass-roots action and education that helped achieve marriage equality in the District.

GLAA fights to ensure that LGBT residents are treated fairly and respectfully by DC agencies, from the police and fire departments to the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs to the DC public schools.

GLAA pushes for effective public health strategies and accountability in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

GLAA has rated all DC Mayoral and Council candidates in every election since the establishment of home rule, and uses a system noted for its fairness and nonpartisanship.

GLAA provides leadership in coalition efforts on a wide range of civil rights issues, from family rights to condom availability in prisons and public schools to police accountability.

GLAA activity opposes federal restrictions on the District's budget that adversely affect LGBT people.

GLAA enhances its outreach by maintaining a comprehensive website of LGBT advocacy materials, the GLAA Forum blog, and the DCGayEtc.com news aggregator.

On April 26, GLAA will hold its 41st Anniversary Reception honoring this year's recipients of its Distinguished Service Awards: Burgundy Crescent Volunteers, The Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League, Ruby Corado, Jeri Hughes, Will O'Bryan, and Jeffrey D. Richardson.

Burgundy Crescent Volunteers was founded in 2001 as a source of LGBT volunteers for gay and gay-friendly non-profit organizations in the District, Maryland, and Virginia, and brings LGBT singles and couples together for volunteer activities that are social in nature. The group, a non-profit, has over 5,000 members, who have provided over 100,000 volunteer hours to the community. Their good efforts have ranged from doing yard work for GLAA's founder, Frank Kameny, to pruning the cherry trees at the Tidal Basin.

The Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League, SMYAL, was founded in 1984 to promote and support self-confident, healthy, and

productive lives for LGBT and questioning youth ages 13–21, as they transition from adolescence into adulthood. SMYAL is the only Washington metro area service organization dedicated solely to supporting LGBTQ and questioning youth. The staff and volunteers concentrate on five activities: Life Skills and Leadership Development; Counseling and Support; Health and Wellness Education; Safe Social Activities; and Community Outreach and Education.

Ruby Corado has been a transgender rights activist in DC for over 15 years, focusing on the Latino community in the areas of health care, HIV, human rights, and immigration. She has been tireless and outspoken in defending and assisting transgender people, demanding justice for brutalized and murdered sex workers. She has been at victims' hospital bedsides, at meetings with police officials, and at crime scenes, and has organized vigils, bringing her own experience as a Latina transwoman to bear in promoting the interests of this at-risk community in our city. Ruby has worked as a program manager for Whitman Walker Health, Transgender Health Empowerment, and Latinas En Acción, a group she has led for many years.

Jeri Hughes has persistently and doggedly pressed the District government to increase its employment of transgender people. Her efforts led Mayor Vincent Gray to direct the Department of Employment Services to conduct Project Empowerment job training for transgender citizens. Her efforts to highlight violations of the DC Human Rights Act by the Department of Corrections have led to ongoing efforts by the city and activists to improve the treatment of the city's transgender inmates and detainees. Jeri Hughes helps transgender people every day in her job at Transgender Health Empowerment.

Will O'Bryan is Managing Editor of Metro Weekly, which he joined in 2005 as a community reporter. He previously served as a news reporter and arts editor for the Washington Blade, and as a media liaison for a nonprofit health organization. Prior to that, he was arts and entertainment editor for Just Out, the Pacific Northwest's premier LGBT publication. Will is an unwavering advocate for coverage of the entire breadth of the LGBT community, especially those who are often neglected. In his biweekly column, "Stonewall Baby," he personally engages issues affecting our entire community. He exemplifies the quiet, unheralded commitment of the many people who do the vital work of building community.

Jeffrey D. Richardson is Director of the Mayor's Office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Affairs, where he has taken the initiative to connect activists with key agency staff and get results. His tireless efforts have ranged from advocacy within the government to supervising young LGBT interns. He brings to his job the empathy and service-oriented approach that he developed in his career as a social worker. In his prior post as president of the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club, he was a steady leader who worked amicably and productively with GLAA and other advocacy groups and this year's recipients of its Distinguished Service Award.

I ask the House to join me in congratulating the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance.

HONORING MAYOR JOE AFFRONTI

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Temple Terrace Mayor Joe Affronti. In addition to representing the City of Temple Terrace, Florida, Mr. Affronti has also been a strong advocate for Project Gratitude.

Project Gratitude was founded in 2006 by David Lefavor, a retired military chaplain and has been championed by Mayor Affronti. Its mission was to provide military chaplains returning from deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan with a three-day complimentary visit to Tampa, Florida. During their stay, the chaplains and their families would visit area attractions including Busch Gardens, the Museum of Science and Industry, the Kennedy Space Center, and local restaurants.

In addition to his loyal support of Project Gratitude, Mayor Affronti enjoys community support in this endeavor from individuals, businesses, and Veterans' Service Organizations including: American Legion Post 152, Suncoast Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), Tampa Navy League, Busch Gardens, Kennedy Space Center, Lupton's Catering, Chamber of Commerce of Temple Terrace Florida, Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI), Marriott Towne Place, Hilton Garden Inn—North Tampa, the Marine Corps League of Florida, as well as the Major Samuel Woodfill Chapter of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) in Dayton, Ohio.

Due to the drawdown of U.S. military forces from Iraq and Afghanistan, Project Gratitude's mission will conclude with its last reception on April 25th in Temple Terrace, Florida having provided a total of 75 Chaplains and their families with a 3-day "R & R" in appreciation for their service and sacrifice for God and Country.

As Vice Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, it is truly my honor to recognize Mayor Affronti for his dedication to this program and the cause of improving the lives of those who so selflessly gave to our Nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAROL STAFFORD

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Carol Stafford, a dear friend and an indefatigable health professional who for 39 years has dedicated her life to nursing and caring for the poor and those in need in San Mateo County. She retired as a triage nurse at Willow Clinic in Menlo Park on March 17, 2012 after a remarkable career that has touched the lives of thousands of county residents.

For almost four decades Carol brought life saving care to patients in the emergency room at San Mateo County General and she spearheaded comprehensive procedures for treating victims of sexual assault at a time when most hospitals had few protocols. She chose to work in facilities (Chope Hospital and Willow Clinic) that treated the neediest and most vulnerable members of society because she believed that all patients deserve the highest level of medical care, regardless of economic circumstances. One of her patients described her as the nicest person he had ever met, but Carol treated all people the same way—with the utmost kindness, compassion and respect.

On June 10, 1973 Carol graduated from the College of San Mateo with an associate degree in nursing. The next day she started her career working nights on the medical surgical floor at Chope Hospital, which is now San Mateo Medical Center. Two years later she moved to the emergency room and by 1981 she was promoted to Nurse Manager of the Emergency Department. While she was working full time she returned to college and earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing at California State University at Long Beach.

Back then police had limited protocols for dealing with victims of sexual assault. Often times, assault victims were taken to emergency rooms for a rape kit, but no counseling would be offered. Carol decided she wanted to change that and worked with the emergency room physician manager, the police department and the board of supervisors to develop comprehensive treatments for survivors of sexual assault.

At the time, I was on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and worked with Carol to develop these new standards. Policies and procedures were implemented to train staff. There was always someone on call who knew exactly how to treat victims of sexual assault with both counseling and support and Chope Hospital emerged as a model and a leader in handling rape cases. Over time, the program evolved into the Keller Center for Family Violence Intervention, a nationally recognized program that provides victims of child abuse, elder abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence with comprehensive medical, emotional, social and legal support.

Carol has strong ties to the Bay Area. She was born in San Francisco and grew up in San Carlos. At age 15 Carol's father passed away. Her mother went to work to support the family, demonstrating qualities of strength and independence. All three sisters graduated from college and went on to have successful careers. Carol's younger sister, Denise Raabe, is the Santa Clara County Deputy District Attorney and her middle sister, Gail Raabe, served as San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner.

Carol is a life-long Giant's fan and a baseball fanatic. Growing up, she posted 8-by-10-inch photographs of the entire San Francisco Giants team in her bedroom. To this day, she has season tickets. Carol's devoted husband of 41 years, George Stafford, her sons Paul and Joseph and her daughter-in-law, Courtney Stafford, will now enjoy more quality time with Carol. It's important to note that even as demanding as Carol's nursing career has been, she has always put family first and was home most days when her boys came home from school.

Though Carol has retired from a wonderful career, she will continue to play a vital role in our community and she will certainly have a friend in me for life.

Mr. Speaker, Carol Stafford has dedicated her life to assisting people in need. I ask that the House of Representatives to join me in

commending her for her extraordinary selflessness and service.

CONGRATULATING THE MISSION SHARYLAND RATTLERS VARSITY SOCCER TEAM

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Mission Sharyland Rattlers varsity soccer team of Sharyland High School in Sharyland, Texas on winning the UIL Class 5A state boys soccer championship. The Sharyland Rattlers boys' soccer team victoriously ended a long season on Saturday, April 21, 2012, at Birkelbach Field in Georgetown, Texas.

A crowd of more than 750 fans watched the Sharyland Rattlers team win 3–2 in a shootout to defeat Katy Morton Ranch. In their long 31–3–3 winning season, this outstanding boys' soccer team proved that hard work, dedication, and skill are the perfect recipe for champions. These high school soccer players were led to the championship title through the tireless leadership of their Head Coach Reveriano Hernandez. I congratulate the educators and leaders of this superb team. Key players in the team include Most Valuable Player during the Championship game Jesus Olivarez and Jorge Medina, Most Valuable Player Defensive during the Championship game. Parents, faculty, family, friends and former students traveled to the championship game to support and encourage the boys' soccer team. This championship marks an accomplishment and proud occasion for the team, school and those who attended the game to show their support.

Sharyland High School is part of the Sharyland Independent School District. It was Sharyland's first time playing at the UIL state tournament and has now set a pace for winning tradition as the school's first state soccer championship for Sharyland High School. The Sharyland Rattlers have been recognized for setting the area record for 31 (wins) 3 (ties) 3 (loses). With the motivation to bring home the state championship the team devoted 18 hours a week in training and practiced diligently during Christmas and Spring Break.

I am honored to praise the accomplishments of Sharyland, Texas' home team, the Sharyland Rattlers boys' soccer team as the Class 5A boys' soccer state title champions. Congratulations.

GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTEERISM

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate those in my State being honored with Governor's Award for Volunteerism. The following Maine people and organizations have showed exemplary commitment to donating their time and energy to help others:

Volunteer of the Year Julia Brown, Service-Learning Practitioner Donna Vigue, Outstanding National Service Volunteer Elisabeth Lohmueller, Youth Volunteer Julia Brown, Corporate Volunteerism honoree Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, Outstanding School District Sanford, and Outstanding Nonprofit Volunteer Program Trekkers.

In a cynical world that calls us to believe no one does something for nothing, these volunteers and thousands more like them continue to give us hope and belief in each other's goodness.

HONORING KATELYN MOODY

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great Nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share these with my House colleagues.

Katelyn Moody is a sophomore at Deer Park High School in Harris County, Texas. Her essay topic is: In your opinion, why is it important to be involved in the political process?

IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

In life each person is responsible for finding his or her own happy ending. This also suggests that we walk a path in our life with our happiness. The pursuit of happiness as we have come to phrase it in our own government. Within our pursuit of happiness, we are not only one, we are a unified nation, who has withstood the best of times and the worst of times, who has come to the rescue when no one else will take a stand. A unified nation who is not made of one, but made of many. For our country depends on those who are in pursuit of America's happiness and therefore citizens must stand for what is right and what is just. Our first step to pursue our country, the United States of America's happiness is to step forward and become involved in the political process.

It is of vital importance that each and every person is involved in making decisions for our country. If we are a nation who will stand for nothing, we will fall for anything. The citizens must be the strong hold of our country and hold our ground. For instance being involved in the political process is a citizen's duty and responsibility. Citizens must be aware of current events in the world and how that one situation could impact us locally, nationally, and globally. It is imperative for one to know what is going on in your country for you to be able to form decisions about what is right and what is just. Knowledge is valuable and can reveal to us what is best for our country. If a person isn't involved in our country's political process it shows a lack of interest in what is best for America and its people. If we lose sight of how our country was based on the ability to make choices that benefit our government and its inhabitants, we have lost our patriotism. Our country is only as good as it's citizens collective efforts.

They say character is what you do when no one is watching. From my standpoint, I interpret this as we can't only take part in the political process when it is important to us, but we must take part in the political process at all times because it is important to every American. Americans' beliefs, ethics, morals and values are illuminated through our choices and our political standpoints. Our voices should not be silent echoes ringing through our nation, but should envelop the nation with our prevalent concern. Our voices will be heard, but the choice is ours to speak up. Speaking up shows our character and who we each are and what we believe in. It unveils how we should be constant participants in America's political process. If we all stand together for what we believe in and what are values are, how could our country go wrong? We can't prevail with only some participators, everyone must participate to guarantee our freedoms and our pursuit of happiness.

You see, our founding fathers put forth an insurmountable effort to guarantee our freedom and our pursuit of prosperity. We must ask ourselves, to what extent will our generation rise to protect those same rights for another strong hold, another upcoming generation. We must speak up, show what we stand for, and let the character of America be unveiled. We must not sit like ducks thinking to ourselves, ''Oh well, they can handle it, they will surely speak up'' because if they don't, our strong hold is no longer and we will show our lack of interest in our political processes which protect freedom and the pursuit of a full and prosperous life. And, without those things we would be left in an abyss of nothingness. It is shown here how important taking part in political processes proves to be and the consequences of not doing so. Remember, the choice is ours to speak up. American's are responsible for finding our own happiness and to continue pursuing this, no matter the cost.

IN MEMORY OF DELORES A. PARKS

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to pay tribute to the late Delores A. Parks, a woman who spent her entire life tirelessly caring for her community. Mrs. Parks passed away in her sleep on Sunday, April 15, 2012. She was 77.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, ''Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve.'' Mrs. Parks was blessed with many gifts and talents, but her greatness came from her dedication to the community. She is truly a hero of mine. Mrs. Parks was a generous, warmhearted and loving woman who always went the extra mile to support her neighbors.

I know the difference one person can make because I am a witness to the impact of Mrs. Parks' extraordinary career of service to others on the lives of ordinary boys and girls and men and women. There is much wisdom in the ancient proverb that says if you catch a person a fish, you feed him for a day; if you teach a person to fish, you will feed her for a lifetime. Mrs. Parks was a great lady but what makes her truly special is her commitment to serving others altered for the good the trajectory of thousands of lives.

Mrs. Parks first answered the call to serve as a daycare provider, a field she worked in for 53 years. She later founded the Compton Family Day Care Association, which provided instruction to others on how to become daycare providers. She took pride and much joy in her work, offering meals to the children and their families and planning sporting events, field trips, and church activities. Her hard work and joyfulness undoubtedly transformed the lives of these young children and her community as a whole.

Faith and love for the Lord played a large and constant role in Mrs. Parks' life. She was raised as a devout Catholic, and she later became a licensed missionary for the First Church of Deliverance under the late Elder O.D. Russell. In 1997, she became a member of King's Dominion Life Center under the leadership of her son-in-law, Bishop T.A. Moore.

When remembering the life of Mrs. Parks, I cannot help but call to mind this scripture: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:8–9). Truer words were never spoken. Mrs. Parks reflected these words in her manner and deeds, and she served as an example of the selflessness and kindness we should all strive to display in our own lives.

Mrs. Parks was preceded in death by her loving husband of 38 years, Willie M. Parks, and by her daughter, Katrina E. White. Left to cherish her memory are her children Emerson Mims, Parris Parks, and Donna Moore (Bishop T.A.); grandchildren Huber White, Eboni Galloway, Ferrante Manning, and Breana Moore; great grandchildren Kameron White, Huber White, Kutura White, Akhella White, and Taylor Bibbs; brothers Carl McDonald and Rickey McDonald; and a multitude of relatives, neighbors, and friends.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my sympathies to Mrs. Parks' family. My thoughts and prayers are with them during this difficult time. They have lost a beloved mother, sister, aunt, grandmother, great grandmother. The community Mrs. Parks served for more than a half century mourns the loss of a hero. I mourn the loss of a dear friend and role model.

On this sad occasion, I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in a moment of silence to honor the memory of Mrs. Delores A. Parks.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I inadvertently voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 170 (to provide an extension of Federal-aid high, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund) when I meant to vote "no."

I would like to correct for the record that I wanted to vote "no" on rollcall vote 170.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for votes in the House of Representatives between April 16th and 18th. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall No. 152 for H.R. 3001, had I been present, I would have voted "aye"; rollcall No. 153 for H.R. 4040, had I been present, I would have voted "aye"; rollcall No. 154 for H. Res. 614, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 155 for H. Res. 614, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 156 for H. Res. 614, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 157 for H.R. 1815, had I been present, I would have voted "aye"; rollcall No. 158 for H.R. 4089, had I been present, I would have voted "aye"; rollcall No. 159 for H.R. 4089, had I been present, I would have voted "aye"; rollcall No. 160 for H.R. 4089, had I been present, I would have voted "aye"; rollcall No. 161 for H.R. 4089, had I been present, I would have voted "aye"; rollcall No. 162 for H.R. 4089, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 163 for H.R. 4089, had I been present, I would have voted "aye"; rollcall No. 164 for H.R. 4089, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 165 for H. Res. 619, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 166 for H. Res. 619, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 167 approving the Journal, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 168 for H.R. 4348, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 169 for H.R. 4348, had I been present, I would have voted "aye"; rollcall No. 170 for H.R. 4348, had I been present, I would have voted "nay"; rollcall No. 171 for H.R. 2453, had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

CELEBRATING MURIEL "MANNY" TUTEUR

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate my friend and role model, Manny Tuteur and to wish her a very, very happy 90th birthday.

There are some people who seem bigger than life—whose accomplishments make you pause to wonder how one person could achieve so much. Manny is one of those people.

It's almost impossible to catalogue all the accomplishments in her life.

She's a veteran. During WWII, Manny served in the Women's Army Corps and received training at the Parachute Training School.

She's a problem solver and a teacher. She worked as a caseworker for the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare and taught preschool at Jewish Community Centers.

And she has been a fighter for working men and women for over 70 years, starting as a milling machine operator at the U.S. Steel South Works plant in Chicago and going on to work at the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union where she started the Amalgamated Day Care and Health Center. She directed that Center from 1969 through 1983.

Manny is a natural leader—who has served on the Chicago and Central States Joint Board of ACTWU, co-chair of the Coalition of Labor Union Women's National Child Care Task Force and a member of CLUW's National Executive Board.

I have relied on Manny for sound advice and inspiration for years—and I'm not the only one. Manny has advised the National Implementation Task Force of the White House Conference on Families, the Illinois Women's Agenda, and Women for Economic Justice. Manny's extraordinary work has been recognized by many—induction into the Chicago Women's Hall of Fame, the National Council of Jewish Women's Hannah G. Solomon Award, and the Coalition of Labor Union Women's Florence Criley Award are just some of her awards.

Manny's life is not just committed to social and economic justice, but to her family. The love of her life was Charles, her husband of 63 years. She adores her children, Peter and Judy, and her 13-year-old granddaughter Rebecca. Manny's legacy includes not just her record of improving workers' rights, women's rights and human rights, it also includes her family and her many friends whose lives she has touched and made so much better.

Manny turns 90 on May l7th—and, now living in Laguna Hills, California, she continues working to make the world a better place. Whether it's registering voters, fighting against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, demonstrating with striking grocery store workers, or speaking out in support of Roe v. Wade, Manny continues to lead a life of activism. At a die-in protect recently to fight cuts to Adult Day Health Care. Manny said at the protest, "I'm fighting to the very end. I'm fighting for the rights of people to have a decent quality of life."

Manny, I love you and thank you for your friendship, and hope you will continue to organize for justice for many years to come.

HONORING THE VETERANS OF THE APRIL 24, 2012 EASTERN IOWA HONOR FLIGHT

HON. DAVID LOEBSACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, today, eighty-six Iowa veterans of the Greatest Generation have travelled to our Nation's capital. Accompanied by twenty-seven volunteer guardians who have also served our country in uniform, they have travelled to Washington, DC to visit the monument that was built in their honor.

For many if not all of the Iowans who will be here today, this will be the first time they have seen the National World War II Memorial. I can think of no greater honor than to be there when they see their memorial for the first time and to personally thank each of them for their service to our Nation. They truly are Iowa's, and our Nation's, heroes.

I proudly have in my office a piece of marble from the quarry that supplied the stone

that built the World War II Memorial. That piece of marble, just like the memorial that it built, reminds me of the sacrifices of a generation that, when our country was threatened, rose to defend not just our Nation but the freedoms, democracy, and values that are the foundation of our great country. They did so as one people and one Nation. Their bravery and resilience still inspire us today.

The sheer magnitude of what they accomplished, not just in war but in the peace that followed has stood as an inspiration to every generation since. The Greatest Generation did not seek to be tested both abroad by a war that fundamentally challenged our way of life and at home by the Great Depression and the rebuilding of our economy that followed. But, when called upon to do so, they defended and then rebuilt our Nation. Their patriotism, service, and great sacrifice not only defined their generation—they stand as a testament to the fortitude of our Nation.

I am tremendously proud to welcome Eastern Iowa's veterans to our Nation's capital today. On behalf of every Iowan I represent, I thank them for their service to our country.

HONORING MARIN COUNTY FIRE CHIEF KEN MASSUCCO

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of a passionate and dedicated public servant. Marin County Fire Chief Ken Massucco retired at the end of March 2012 after a career of nearly four decades protecting our communities.

After a year volunteering with the Kentfield Fire Protection District, Chief Massucco joined Marin County Fire Department in 1974. He rose through the ranks as Fire Lieutenant, Senior Captain, and Battalion Chief before being appointed Fire Chief in December 2001 by the Marin County Board of Supervisors.

Throughout his tenure, Chief Massucco maintained a special connection with the residents he served in unincorporated Marin County, and with the firefighters and office staff responsible for keeping our communities safe. In a Department that includes more than 80 full-time and 60 seasonal workers covering a broad and geographically diverse region, it was the care and leadership of Chief Massucco that ensured strong partnerships with the public.

I was especially impressed to see Chief Massucco's work as a lead member of the team that battled the Angel Island fire in October 2008. Marin County firefighters spearheaded a difficult effort to save invaluable cultural and historical treasures, including the Angel Island Immigration Station, which is recognized as a National Historic Landmark and a part of the California State Parks. All Americans owe a debt of gratitude to Chief Massucco and the Marin County Fire Department for their efforts to ensure the survival of this unique site.

Chief Massucco also brought his leadership to other public safety initiatives, and his work was recognized beyond our County. He assisted firefighters in emergencies across California as an Operations Section Chief within the Incident Command System, and in 2009 he was recognized by the California Fire Chiefs Association as Fire Chief of the Year. Chief Massucco also led our County Urban Search and Rescue Task Force, which offers emergency services not only in Marin County, but also to partners across the country in need of additional responders.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in thanking Chief Massucco for his contributions to Marin County. He has set an admirable standard for compassionate and responsive public service, and we wish him the best in his retirement.

HONORING PASTOR JOHNNIE ROLAND, SR., WORLD WAR II VETERAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding service of World War II Veteran and Civil Rights Activist, Pastor Johnnie Roland Sr., as he celebrates his 90th birthday. Born the son of sharecroppers, Pastor Roland was drafted into the United States Army on November 28, 1942.

Johnnie Roland Sr. was born and remains a lifelong resident of Coffeeville, Mississippi. He married the late Leida Rounsaville Roland and from this union, 14 children were born. His oldest and only son, Johnnie Roland Jr., served in the Vietnam War.

Johnnie Roland served in World War II from 1943 to 1945. Roland and three others from Yalobusha County, Mississippi, Tommy Dudley, Walter Lee Martin, and Ulysses Kee were inducted into the Army at Camp Shelby, Mississippi.

After about eleven months of ammunition training at Ft. Knox, Kentucky, he and the 619th Ordnance Ammunition Company, shipped out of New York City and arrived in Liverpool, England. On June 6, 1944, Roland boarded a landing craft late in the day and remained anchored in the English Channel surrounded by danger on all sides. There he waited to land on the Normandy Beach, about 3 days after D–Day.

For the next several months he advanced through France, Belgium, and Germany loading and unloading ammunition on and near the front lines of battle. On November 29, 1945, he was honorably discharged from Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Roland was awarded the Nameto Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and World War II Victory Medal for his superior performance and dedication in the United States Army.

After his honorable discharge from the United States Army, Roland returned to Mississippi. Pastor Roland answered his call to ministry in 1960, and served as pastor of the Pine Grove Baptist Church from 1962 until August 2009. Pastor Roland was very active in the Civil Rights Movement working with other local advocates to integrate the local segregated school systems, marching front line in sometimes very hostile situations.

During the boycott of the local school system, Pastor Roland was one of a very few who stood strong by keeping his children out of school for one whole year. Eventually, the school systems were integrated and he was able to see his children receive a quality education within an integrated public school system. Pastor Roland's most recent accomplishment is his eight year service on the Coffeeville Board of Alderman.

According to Pastor Roland, though he has accomplished many things within his lifetime, his greatest has been the honor to vote for and see America's first African American President, Barack Obama elected into office.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Pastor Johnnie Roland Sr., a decorated World War II Veteran and Civil Rights Activist for his dedication and service to this country and the state of Mississippi.

HONORING KOMAL LUTHRA

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share these with my House colleagues.

Komal Luthra is a sophomore at Clear Springs High School in Galveston County, Texas. Her essay topic is: In your opinion, what role should government play in our lives?

IMPORTANCE OF INVOLVEMENT

The government plays a major role in our lives. It governs us and tries to keep the country running in a smooth manner even though there may be conflicts taking place with other countries. The government is there to serve the people. For example, currently, our country is facing some financial challenges, still the government is making efforts to help those without jobs and find ways to cut spending. Not only does the government play a major role in our lives, but we also have the opportunity to be involved. We must realize that we do not have to be politicians or government officials to be involved.

There are so many ways one can get involved in the political process. One can vote, voice his or her opinions, and inform others about issues that our country is facing. It is important to stay updated with the issues we are facing as a country and how we can slowly deliver the message and work together to make a difference. It is like a chain reaction. For example, in recycling programs, an individual cannot enforce recycling because it is a group effort to spread the word in the society to save our environment. We can also get involved by contacting an elected official or candidate via phone or email, visiting or attending political meetings. We can take part in demonstrations, protests, boycotts, or marches to have our voice heard. This presents the fact that as citizens we have a lot of freedom and many opportunities. The issues being faced in the economy, education systems, technology, and environment cannot be solved unless we get involved.

When we vote, we take our country's figure in our own hands by voting for the best candidate. It is important that we elect the person who represents our country with good moral, values and care for the common people of this country. Every vote counts when it comes to choosing the best candidate to be our president because he or she will be deciding and leading our country's future for the next four years or more.

We have a democracy which gives us the right to speak our mind in political words. This right is given to us in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution. For example, if an individual faces a challenge where his or her rights are being violated, he or she should come forward and bring the issue up to a government official. Elected official should help one find a way to solve it through creation of new laws, establishment of new programs or explore other options to preserve the individual's rights. A democracy includes all the people and it is incomplete if only a fraction of the people is representing the whole population. Men, women, elderly and even young adults should actively participate. Even though children may not be able to vote they should still be aware of government so as they grow up, they are prepared to represent the country.

In conclusion, by being politically active, we learn to become motivated, hopeful, and optimistic. It is our right as citizens to practice ''freedom of speech'' and stand up and speak for our country. It shows confidence, determination, and passion.

IN RECOGNITION OF TOM HUENING

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Tom Huening for his three decades of service to San Mateo County. As controller, county supervisor and community college district trustee, Tom has advocated for taxpayers throughout his career in public service.

Tom has had successful careers in the military, the airline industry, real estate and public service. The common threads running through all of them are hard work and his hunger to learn.

Tom was born in Chicago and grew up in Mount Prospect, Illinois as the son of an oil-burner servicemen and one of 12 children. He learned early on that the best way to overcome weakness is to confront it directly. Tom admits to having a fear of public speaking, yet he earned his Bachelor of Arts in speech from De Paul University in 1965. Right after he graduated, he joined the Navy for five years and was trained as a jet fighter pilot. His service in Vietnam made him experience the harsh realities of war, but he also credits that time for developing leadership skills, self confidence and skills as a team player.

After his military service, Tom became a pilot for TWA and moved his family to San Jose which is when he first involved himself in politics. The city of San Jose and Caltrans were planning on turning a part of the Guadalupe River into a concrete channel to make room for the Almaden Expressway crossing. Tom and his neighbors formed a neighborhood association—with Tom as president—fought the idea and won. Caltrans and the city shored up the sides of the river and even built a bike path underneath the expressway. Reflecting on the success, Tom told a reporter from San Jose Magazine that it was his first taste of politics and what it can do for the common good.

While he was still a TWA pilot, Tom started the transition into his next career, real estate. He worked for Coldwell Banker and then in 1977 started his own business, Huening Investment Company, where he fixed up dilapidated commercial buildings. Along the way, he returned to school and earned an MBA from Pepperdine University and a bachelor of law degree from La Salle University. He is an inactive member of the California Bar Association and served as an arbitrator and mediator with the American Arbitration Association.

In the late 70's, Tom transitioned from the private sector to public service. He was a Trustee on the San Mateo County Community College District from 1981 until 1986 and a member of the San Mateo Board of Supervisors from 1987 until 1998. Tom authored the original San Mateo Countywide Transportation Expenditure Plan which provided the county with 20 years of dedicated transportation funding for infrastructure and public transit improvements. He also is part of a leadership team who was responsible for bringing BART to Millbrae and SFO.

Tom has led many initiatives to improve the well being and quality of life of residents, for example the county's smoke-free workplace ordinance, the requirement to label alcoholic beverages with warnings about fetal alcohol syndrome, the extension of popular trails, and the launching of charter schools to improve the performance of academically struggling schools.

In 1998, Tom was elected San Mateo County Controller and re-elected for four consecutive terms. As a fiscal conservative, he believes that his office ''should be lean and responsive and add value to the County at the lowest taxpayer cost.''

In addition to the contributions to San Mateo County, Tom served as President of the Bay Area Auditor-Controllers Association and on the Executive Committee of the State Auditor-Controllers Association. He has served the national Government Finance Officers Association on their Committee for Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting, their Economic Development and Capital Planning Committee and the Committee on Governmental Budgeting and Fiscal Policy.

Tom is a member of the San Mateo Rotary, the Commonwealth Club and the Bay Trail Steering Committee.

He is the proud father of four daughters and grandfather of nine grandchildren. In his well deserved retirement Tom will enjoy spending more time with them and his friends.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this body to rise with me to honor my friend Tom Huening for his tireless dedication to our community on this day of his retirement as the San Mateo County Controller. He is an extraordinary person who possesses the qualities of a businessman, a humanist and a visionary. San Mateo County is a more efficient and better place because of his outstanding work.

COMMEMORATING THE 97TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and commemorate a solemn occasion of deep personal significance. Today marks 97 years since the infamous episode in which the Ottoman Empire began rounding up and murdering Armenian intellectuals and community leaders in Constantinople. By 1923, some 1.5 million Armenian women, children and men were dead from a systematic campaign we now know as the Armenian Genocide, or Great Crime. Their lives ended in the most brutal ways imaginable, subjected to death marches, burnings, rape and forced starvation. Some 500,000 Armenians who did survive—my own grandparents among them—were forced into exile.

Like others whose families experienced this tragedy first-hand, I did not first learn of the Armenian Genocide in history books. I learned about it from my own Grandmother as she recounted the murders of priests and her flight from the only home she knew.

We must be clear: There is no doubt to the fact that the Armenian Genocide took place. There is no credible historian who can dispute it, and there is no evidence that detracts from its horror and magnitude. What's missing is a moral clarity as penetrating as the facts themselves, and a willingness in this House and in our government to acknowledge the Genocide.

The consequences of surrendering the moral high ground on Genocide denial are manifest and tragic. Since 1915, we have witnessed the same tragedy again and again. In 1939, Adolf Hitler is said to have asked, in justifying his awful crimes, ''Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?'' In the Holodomor in Ukraine, the killing fields of Cambodia, the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, the red clay hills of Rwanda, and now, today in Darfur—genocidal crimes continue. We must acknowledge the Armenian genocide for our collective future, for those who suffer around the world today, and to honor the memories of those who died.

Each time this question arises, there are those who demand we once again sweep history under the rug for political convenience, calling what began 97 years ago anything but Genocide. My response is simple. The systematic extermination of an ethnic group is Genocide, and we insult ourselves and degrade our values when we claim otherwise.

I hope we use this solemn occasion to redouble our support for a more honest appraisal of the facts. So much of who I am is informed by my Armenian heritage, including the moral grounding to demand the truth. As we pray today for those who died, let us also work toward an open and just acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide, the truth, and a strengthened commitment to prevent such atrocities from ever happening again.

TWITCHELL'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MARTHA ROBY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to recognize the 90th anniversary of Twitchell Technical Products—a thriving business in Southeast Alabama.

Mr. E.W. Twitchell founded E.W. Twitchell, Inc. nine decades ago. First established in Unionville, Connecticut, the company later relocated in 1930 to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1945, the company settled in Dothan, Alabama, where its headquarters remain today. To date, Twitchell provides jobs that support nearly 300 families around Dothan. In our area, this company is a staple in the local economy and a cornerstone of the local community.

Mr. Speaker, without question, the number one issue that affects our nation and my home state of Alabama is the health of our economy and the ability to create new American jobs. I am especially aware of this fact from the many discussions I have had with small business owners and employers throughout the district. I was privileged to recently have such a discussion with representatives from Twitchell last month.

During a time when too many employers have been forced to shrink their workforce or even close their doors, I was encouraged to hear about Twitchell's achievements. Through innovation, Twitchell achieved success by changing and adapting to the needs of the market. Mr. Speaker, that is what the free market is all about. Free from government interference or unnecessary regulation, private companies adjust to the demands of the market and remain competitive. When that happens, both employees and consumers benefit.

For example, four decades ago the company acquired a local yarn extrusion venture that specialized in PVC coated yarns. The yarn weaves into a fabric used for everyday products, such as screens, athletic goods, and outdoor furniture. The fabric continues to be Twitchell's best selling product, keeping the company in high-demand as it is one of only two manufacturers of PVC coated yarn and woven products in the U.S.

Here in Congress, we regularly discuss the many barriers that prevent job creation, such as costly federal regulations that stand in the way of private sector growth. We are working to repeal these burdensome federal rules. We want to encourage small business owners who work hard to invest in their employees and their products, not discourage them. The House of Representatives has passed nearly 30 pro-growth jobs-bills to reduce the mountain of federal regulations that limit an employer's ability to create jobs. We should never forget: government does not create jobs; the private sector does.

An economy built to succeed is an economy that is built on a foundation of small business entrepreneurship. Operating on the principles of persistence, innovation, and hard work, Twitchell is a model of American enterprise. It is a privilege for me to stand here today to honor the legacy of Twitchell and to recognize the many dedicated employees who have made the company a success through the years. I congratulate them for reaching this milestone, and I look forward to the centennial celebration.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Twitchell on its 90th anniversary and in wishing the company many more decades of success.

CONGRATULATORY REMARKS FOR OBTAINING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SANDY ADAMS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mrs. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Kyle Holysz for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

For his Eagle Scout project, Kyle led the construction and installation of reusable garden boxes for local nursing homes. Throughout the history of the Boy Scouts of America, the rank of Eagle Scout has only been attained through dedication to concepts such as honor, duty, country and charity. By applying these concepts to daily life, Kyle has proven his true and complete understanding of their meanings, and thereby deserves this honor.

I offer my congratulations on a job well done and best wishes for the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS' SOUTH BAY AREA GAMES

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an exciting event that took place in the 37th Congressional District this past weekend: The Southern California Special Olympics' South Bay Area Games. The games took place on Saturday, April 21 at the Veterans Park and Sport Complex in Carson, California.

As a once aspiring Olympic athlete myself, I have always supported the Special Olympics and their goals. The Special Olympics of Southern California provides year-round sports training and competitions for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, all at no cost to the athletes or their families.

The Special Olympics, however, serves a deeper purpose than simply recreation and competition. Special Olympic athletes gain the opportunity to develop physical fitness and athletic skills, create relationships with other athletes and community members, and demonstrate the courage to achieve their dreams. Within the Southern California chapter alone, there are nearly 11,600 athletes and 15,000 coaches and volunteers. These numbers illustrate the popularity and far-reaching impact of the games.

The Special Olympics were first started in 1963 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver as a camp to provide people with intellectual disabilities with physical fitness and sports. Five years later, she organized the first International Special Olympics games, and athletes around the world have competed ever since. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Act, which will authorize funding for sports, health, education and employment programs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the hard work of the athletes and volunteers of the Southern California Special Olympics. I know the people of California will continue to support the games and be inspired by the dedication of those involved.

REGARDING THE 97TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

It was 97 years ago today that over 1.5 million men, women, and children, almost 75 percent of the pre-war Armenian population, were brutally exterminated by the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman authorities arrested and later murdered over 250 Armenian political, intellectual, and religious leaders in Istanbul, beginning a horrific and systematic campaign to wipe a 3,000 year-old community from the face of the earth.

Armenian members of the Turkish armed forces were separated from their units and placed into labor battalions, where they were either worked to death or murdered. In Armenian villages throughout Turkey, adult males were singled out for execution, while the remaining women, children, and elderly inhabitants were then forced to march without food or water to the Syrian Desert. En route they were set upon by the Ottoman Security Service's "Special Organization," which consisted of released convicts and was created specifically for the purpose of carrying out ethnic cleansing. In the end, of the 2.1 million Armenians residing in Turkey at the start of World War I, only 100,000 would survive to see the end of hostilities.

And yet, despite clear evidence that genocide occurred, many officials today refuse to even to use the word genocide when referring to this incident. By equivocating, they not only dishonor the victims of this atrocity and their descendents, they increase the chance that other crimes against humanity are met with similar equivocation.

Indeed, before sending the "Death's Head" SS units into Poland with orders to "kill without pity or mercy all men, women and children," Adolph Hitler is reported to have commented to his generals, "who still talks nowadays of the extermination of the Armenians?"

When we fail to fully acknowledge that genocide was perpetrated against the Armenian people in 1915, it becomes a little easier to do the same today when we see similar atrocities unfold in Bosnia, or Rwanda or Iraq or Sudan.

Last week the world commemorated International Holocaust Remembrance Day as people everywhere gathered to renew our collective pledge to "Never Forget." Today we gather for a similar purpose as we remember the first genocide of the 20th century. We recall the suffering of the Armenian people 97 years

ago and endeavor to ease the pain of their descendants not only out of sympathy for what they have experienced, but to remind ourselves that we must never allow it to happen again.

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. IRENE DUPLESSIS

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Mrs. Irene Duplessis of Worcester, Massachusetts who turns 100 years old on May 1, 2012. Irene is an active woman who enjoys spending time with her family, playing bingo, and participating in Elder Summit Care. Today, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in wishing Mrs. Irene Duplessis a Happy 100th Birthday!

APRIL 23 INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, Turkish-Americans and Turkish people throughout the world are commemorating April 23 as National Sovereignty and Children's Day and I happily join them.

On April 23, 1920, during the War of Independence, the Grand National Assembly met in Ankara to lay the foundation of a new, independent, and secular Republic, born from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk openly declared that it was absolutely necessary to form a government that would be the ''destiny of the country'' governed ''by the determination and will of the Turkish nation as expressed in the Grand National Assembly.''

President Atatürk dedicated April 23 to the children of the country to emphasize that they are the future of the new nation.

Following the victory over invading forces and the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923, Atatürk began to create the first predominantly Muslim secular, pluralistic, and westward-looking democracy. Over the next eight years, Atatürk embarked on ambitious and sweeping reforms in education, women's rights, and the judicial system. Today, Turkey stands as a model for other countries looking to shed their past and join the international community of democratic countries.

Every year, the children in Turkey celebrate this National Sovereignty and Children's Day as a national holiday. Schools participate in week-long ceremonies marked by performances in all fields in large stadiums watched by the entire nation. Among the activities included on this day is one in which the children send their peer representatives to work with state officials and high ranking bureaucrats in their offices. The President, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Ministers, and provincial governors all work with children in their offices. These children, in turn, sign executive orders relating to educational and environmental policies. On this day, the children also replace the parliamentarians in the Grand National Assembly and hold a special session to discuss matters concerning children's issues.

The importance of April 23 as a special day for children has spread to the international community. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) decided to recognize this important day as International Children's Day.

Congratulations to the country of Turkey on the occasion of National Sovereignty and Children's Day.

COMMEMORATING THE 97TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in commemorating the 97th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Ninety-seven years ago, the government of the Ottoman Empire started a ruthless and systematic campaign of genocide against the Armenian people. Beginning with the targeted execution of 300 Armenian leaders, this intentional attempt at extermination ultimately claimed the lives of over 1.5 million people and forcibly exiled another 500,000.

And despite these chilling numbers and a clear historical record of fact, there remains a failure to acknowledge this vast human tragedy for what it truly is: genocide. That is why it is essential that we continue to speak out and solemnly commemorate the Armenian Genocide. Accordingly, I am proud to support a resolution this session of Congress that affirms the U.S. record on the Armenian Genocide and honors its victims and survivors.

By acknowledging this dark chapter of human history, we help protect against the possible creation of a violent culture of impunity. We cannot allow past acts of evil to be erased from our collective consciousness if we are to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

In closing, I encourage all my colleagues to take time today to remember and honor the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

IN RECOGNITION OF STEVEN DANA CHAN, D.D.S

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Steven Chan. Dr. Chan was recently installed, on March 30, 2012, as the 38th President of the California Society of Pediatric Dentistry. Dr. Chan is a Pediatric Dental Specialist and has practiced in Fremont, California for over twenty-eight years. With a patient base of thousands, he has helped two generations of patients grow up with healthy, beautiful smiles.

The mission of the California Society of Pediatric Dentistry is to serve the membership and the public by advocating for the optimal oral health of infants, children, and adolescents. Dr. Chan is well suited to lead the California Society of Pediatric Dentistry. His education, professional expertise, experience, academic positions, hospital appointments, professional honors, professional association memberships, leadership skills, and community service are outstanding.

Dr. Chan's professional honors include Fellowships in the American College of Dentists, Academy of Dentistry International, American Academy of Pediatric Dentists, Pierre Fauchard Academy, and the International College of Dentists.

He received the Citizen of the Year Award from Citizens for a Better Community and the Southern Alameda County Dental Society's Douglas R. Franklin Distinguished Service Award. Dr. Chan has served in numerous leadership positions within the California Dental Association and the American Dental Association. He holds significant professional association memberships related to dentistry and is also a member of the American Society of Association Executives.

Dr. Chan has not only distinguished himself in his profession but also continues to be a prominent force in community service. He has served in leadership positions in the South Bay Chinese Club Scholarship Foundation, Citizens for a Better Community, Fremont Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Foundation, Fremont Library Commission, Washington Hospital Foundation, Ohlone Community College and has engaged in numerous civic activities to support the City of Fremont.

Dr. Chan has truly been a leader of Organized Dentistry—having served as President of the California Dental Association and now as President of his specialty, Pediatric Dentistry. He has worked to improve the quality and access to oral health for all individuals as well as advocating for the dental profession.

I am confident Dr. Chan will be a dynamic leader of the California Society of Pediatric Dentistry and I offer my congratulations and best wishes to him.

TRIBUTE TO TELACU FOR ITS COMMITMENT TO THE ADVANCEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF LATINOS

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today and ask Congress to recognize June 8th as TELACU Scholars Day.

The TELACU Education Foundation was established by TELACU in 1983 to respond to crisis-level dropout rates for Latino Students. As the largest community and economic development corporation in the United States, TELACU is a pioneering institution committed to service, empowerment, advancement and the creation of self-sufficiency within the Latino community.

Realizing the high dropout rates for Latino students, the TELACU Education Foundation responded by investing in our youth through education to create a strong future for our country. TELACU began its efforts to reverse high dropout rates among Latino students by

providing monetary support and counseling for first generation and low income students. The TELACU Scholarship Program is an exemplary program that helps students realize their dream of a college education by providing scholarships and supplemental support.

Although TELACU understands that financial assistance is a vital component for college students to achieve academic success, it also recognizes the underlying challenges many young adults face including socioeconomic factors, family responsibilities, cultural identity, and financial solvency. Students who are the first member of their families to pursue a college degree often must make their own academic support system in order to achieve their dreams. TELACU understands these challenges.

For nearly three decades, the Education Foundation has worked to remove the formidable barriers that often prevent Latino youth from achieving academic success and providing them with professional role models and academic support. The TELACU Scholarship Program provides its youth not only with monetary assistance, but with the counseling, leadership training, and time management training necessary to help students achieve their dreams.

I am proud of the way the TELACU Education Foundation has contributed to the development of our future Latino leaders. Each year, TELACU supports 500 Latino college students and 1,500 middle and high school students. In each program, 100% of the students graduate.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor TELACU, the TELACU Education Foundation and scholarship programs like this one, for believing in the dream of higher education for all of America's next generation of leaders. I extend my congratulations to the TELACU scholars and the people who make their dreams a reality as they celebrate the 29th Annual TELACU Education Foundation Scholarship Awards Dinner, Building the Dream, on Friday, June 8th, 2012.

HONORING DAVID GRABILL

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor David Grabill, a lawyer in Santa Rosa, CA, who is receiving the Jack Green Civil Liberties Award from the Sonoma County Chapter of the Northern California American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). This award is presented annually to a leader who has advanced the cause of social justice in the community.

During his 45 years of practice, David Grabill has represented individuals and groups in civil rights cases not only in our community, but in places like Gary, Indiana; Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota; Charleston, West Virginia; and Delano and Escondido, California. He assisted in Robert Kennedy's presidential campaign, represented members of the Black Panther Party in Los Angeles, and worked with the United Farm Workers on union rights. He has also extended his practice to welfare and reproductive rights, Native American legal services, black lung, labor matters, and others, giving his time and expertise to those in need of legal services.

Mr. Grabill grew up in Washington, DC, and attended Yale University and the University of Pennsylvania law school. He met his wife, Dorothy Battenfeld in West Virginia, and, in 1981, settled with his family in Santa Rosa. He served for 14 years as directing attorney for California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA), working on behalf of California's rural poor.

He soon joined with other attorneys during the Reagan administration to obtain an injunction prohibiting the federal government from detaining any individual merely to investigate her/his immigration status unless they had reasonable grounds to believe the person was not legally in the Country. He also served for many years on the Board of the Sonoma County ACLU Chapter where he provided significant pro bono legal support on various issues.

Today David Grabill specializes locally in cases involving affordable housing and housing discrimination. With the Housing Advocacy Group (HAG) that he started with friends in 1998, he focuses his efforts on creating more affordable housing and combating discrimination against lower income, mostly Latino and African American, residents.

Mr. Speaker, David Grabill has dedicated his life to the advancement of social justice and human rights. Please join me in congratulating him on the Sonoma ACLU's Jack Green Civil Liberties Award.

HONORING THE VETERANS OF THE APRIL 24, 2012, QUAD CITIES HONOR FLIGHT

HON. DAVID LOEBSACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, today I have the great honor of welcoming veterans of the Greatest Generation to our nation's capital. Accompanied by volunteer guardians, these veterans from the Quad Cities have travelled to Washington, DC from Iowa and Illinois to visit the monument that was built in their honor.

For many of these veterans, today will be the first time they have seen the National World War II Memorial. I am deeply honored to have been invited to join them when they see their memorial for the first time and to have the opportunity to personally thank these heroes.

I am proud to have a piece of marble from the quarry that supplied the stone that built the World War II Memorial in my office. Like the memorial that it built, that piece of marble reminds me of the sacrifices of a generation of Americans. When our country was threatened, they rose to defend not just our nation but the freedoms, democracy, and values that make our country the greatest nation on earth. They did so as one people and one country. Their sacrifices and determination in the face of great threats to our way of life are still humbling and inspiring today.

The sheer magnitude of what the Greatest Generation accomplished, not just in war but in the peace that followed, continues to inspire us today. They did not seek to be tested both abroad by a war that fundamentally challenged our way of life and at home by the Great Depression and the rebuilding of our economy that followed. But, when called upon to do so, they defended and then rebuilt our country. Their patriotism, service, and great sacrifice not only defined their generation—they stand as a testament to the fortitude of our nation.

I am tremendously proud to welcome the veterans on the Quad City Honor Flight to our nation's capital today. On behalf of every Iowan I represent, I thank them for their service to our country.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND OLDERSHAW'S 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a man who has spent 50 years serving our local community with great distinction: Reverend Robert H. Oldershaw. Father Oldershaw is a native of Evanston, Illinois, and that is where he continues to make his mark even today.

After being ordained a Catholic priest in 1962, Father Oldershaw worked hard in parishes across Chicago—serving communities in Hyde Park, downtown Chicago and Lincoln Park before landing back at St. Nicholas Parish in his hometown in 1988. Evanston has benefited from his outreach ever since. Father Oldershaw retired in 2006, after almost 20 years in our City. He continues to serve as pastor emeritus at St. Nicholas, and I am happy to say he is a constant and welcome figure in our neighborhood.

Father Oldershaw has made significant contributions to the Catholic Church. For a number of years while working in Chicago he served as the Associate Director for Music of the Archdiocesan Office for Divine Worship. In this role he worked to help parishes across the Chicago area adapt to the then-recent changes stemming from the Second Vatican Council. He has also written a number of articles and pieces of music over the years, and serves as the liturgical editor of Worship—Third Edition (GIA Publications)—a hymnal used in Catholic churches across the country.

In 1999 Father Oldershaw was featured in a documentary entitled A Justice That Heals. This documentary tells the story of how he brought together and fostered forgiveness between the family of a murder victim and the individual who killed their son. Activities such as these were commonplace for a man who has devoted his life to serving his parish and the community as a whole.

In addition to his parish duties, Father Oldershaw was (and remains) extremely active in the Evanston community. He is involved in a large number of organizations furthering the public good. He served as co-president of the Evanston Ecumenical Action Council (now known as Interfaith Action of Evanston), as a member of the board of directors of St. Francis Hospital, and has spent over a decade as a chaplain with the Evanston Police Department. Each of these roles has left an indelible impact on our local community and we are lucky to have had him working among us for so long.

Father Oldershaw also deserves praise for his social justice work. He is an active member of Priests for Justice for Immigrants, and

he regularly visits detainees at McHenry County Jail. He is also a board member of Solidarity Bridge, whose mission is to heal and empower poor people living in Bolivia through providing critical medical care and support for Fair Trade cooperatives.

On behalf of myself, our community, and a grateful nation, I want to say thank you, Father Oldershaw, for all you have done and continue to do for us.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LIFELONG IMPROVEMENTS IN FOOD AND EXERCISE ACT (LIFE)

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, now that the cherry blossoms have signaled that spring has come, I introduce the Lifelong Improvements in Food and Exercise Act (LIFE), authorizing a national initiative to attack a major health problem in the United States that cannot be remedied through the health care system alone. Growing problems of overweight and obesity are now found in Americans of every age, race, and major demographic group, and threatens the health of Americans like no other single disease or condition does. In fact, the key to eliminating many of the most serious health conditions is reducing overweight and obesity, not even the much need Affordable Care Act. The LIFE bill would provide $25 million in funding to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for a coordinated national effort to reverse increasingly sedentary lifestyles and diets that are high in fat and sugar.

Despite rising consciousness of this epidemic, from NBC's 'The Biggest Loser' to a steady stream of diet books, startling rates of obesity among adults and children continue in the United States. In 2007, estimates from the CDC National Center for Health Statistics showed that the percentage of children who are overweight has more than doubled, and among adolescents, the rates have tripled since 1980. Today, 13 million overweight children have an 80 percent chance of being overweight adults, with the health conditions that follow, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and cancer. The CDC reports that Type 2 diabetes, considered an adult disease, is now widespread in children. The healthcare system and the insurance premium of average Americans are paying the price for this generation. The consequences for kids will follow them throughout their lives if we do not act quickly and decisively. If we are serious about healthcare, we must start where the most serious health conditions begin: in the epidemic of overweight and obesity.

The LIFE bill seeks to provide the first national strategy by directing the CDC to pursue obesity and sedentary lifestyles in three ways: train health professionals to recognize the signs of obesity early and educate people concerning healthy lifestyles, such as proper nutrition and regular exercise; conduct education campaigns to teach the public about how to recognize and address overweight and obesity; and develop intervention strategies to be used in everyday life at worksites and in community settings. This legislation is the minimum necessary to address our most important healthcare crisis. Already, chronic diseases, many of which are caused or exacerbated by overweight or obesity, account for 70 percent of all deaths in the U.S., and 60 percent of U.S. medical care expenses annually. According to the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity, the cost of obesity in the United States was more than $117 billion in 2000. The CDC highlights a study that estimates the annual cost to be $147 billion. Currently, it is estimated that between 300,000 and 400,000 deaths per year are related to obesity.

A focused national health initiative is necessary because unhealthy lifestyles have become a normal part of everyday life. Participation in high school physical education classes has dropped from 42 percent in 1991 to 33 percent in 2005. National data show an increase in unhealthy eating habits for adults and no change in physical activity. Changes in nutrition are equally critical because 60 percent of young people consume too much fat, a factor doubling the percentage of overweight youth.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation to mobilize the country now, before entirely preventable health conditions, that often begin in children, overwhelm the Nation's health care system.

RECOGNIZING CAMBODIAN NEW YEAR

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House to join me in acknowledging the New Year, the year of the dragon.

The Cambodian New Year is one of the major celebrations in the Cambodian culture. This time of year also represents the end of the harvest season and allows farmers to enjoy the fruits of their harvest. The celebration lasts for three days which during this time they spend time visiting family and friends. Each day has a name and activities that honor the elder's for their sacrifice for the younger generation.

I am proud that more Cambodians reside in Long Beach, which is located in my Congressional District, than anywhere outside of the nation of Cambodia. This past Saturday, April 21, 2012, nearly 20,000 people celebrated the Cambodian New Year in El Dorado Regional Park in the city of Long Beach. Long Beach certainly was the place to celebrate Cambodian New Year! I consider the opportunity to celebrate the Cambodian New Year every year as one of the great privileges associated with being a Member of Congress from the 37th Congressional District.

I congratulate the Cambodian-Coordinating Council (CCC) for organizing this especially unique and uplifting event, which is one of the highlights of the spring season every year in the 37th Congressional District. This is especially gratifying to me since as a Long Beach City Councilperson I worked closely with the members of the Cambodian community to ensure the festival continues to be held in Long Beach and know firsthand how the CCC has assisted the Cambodian-American population to be self-sufficient, productive members of society and to bridge the gaps that exist between cultures, languages, and generations.

I thank the many community organizations and volunteers for their efforts to ensure the success of the Cambodian New Year Festival. Most importantly, I thank the CCC for providing this opportunity to experience and appreciate the people and culture of Cambodia. I Congratulate the CCC on another successful Cambodian New Year Festival and I look forward to next year's festivities.

Happy Cambodian New Year!

U.S. CITIZEN OF DISTINCTION

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of this one woman . . . who has given of herself to her community and family; and

Whereas, Mrs. Eileen Samuel's spirit is present in Birmingham, Alabama for all to see, being a nurse, neighbor and friend; and

Whereas, this giant of a woman was born in Birmingham, Alabama to Mr. Dewey and Mrs. Dellie Barnes on February 6, 1943, she has been on the move ever since as a woman of God; and

Whereas, this remarkable woman gave of herself, her time, her talent and her life; she never asked for fame or fortune just fairness for the people, she was our quiet storm, a spark that starts a flame; and

Whereas, Mrs. Eileen Samuel led by doing behind the scenes, she encouraged all those around her who wanted to make a difference, be it her children, her elected officials, her neighbors and her church members at Oak Street Baptist Church; she was a virtuous woman, a woman of great integrity who remained true to the uplifting of her community which in turn uplifted my community in Georgia through her daughter DeKalb County Commissioner Sharon Barnes Sutton; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to bestow a Congressional Recognition on Mrs. Eileen Samuel for her leadership, friendship and service to all of the citizens throughout the Nation; a citizen of great worth and so noted distinction;

Now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr., do hereby attest to the 112th Congress that Mrs. Eileen Samuel of Birmingham, Alabama is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Recognition"—Mrs. Eileen Samuel, U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 10th day of March, 2012.

RECOGNITION OF DAVID HINDERLITER FOR HIS SERVICE AS PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE KANKAKEE REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise today to recognize David

Hinderliter for his outstanding service as the President and CEO of the Kankakee Regional Chamber of Commerce. During his impressive 20 years as the head of the Association, Dave oversaw the creation of many successful programs and organizations, leading to recognition and four star accreditation of the Association by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Dave began his service at the Association as the Ambassador to the Chamber and served multiple terms as the Chairman of the Government Affairs Committee of the Illinois Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives. In this position, he led the effort to create a very successful Illinois Chamber Executive education program.

While Dave's accomplishments as Executive have been many, his service to the Association represents only a portion of his service to the profession and the community. Often deflecting credit for success to those with whom he serves, Dave represents the epitome of leadership, enabling others around him to excel and succeed. In addition to his commitment to the Kankakee business community, Dave also finds time to coach his children's soccer teams and lead his son's Scout troop. He is a devoted husband to Diane Hinderliter, and father to Andrew, Amanda, and Cameron Hinderliter.

Once again, I am humbled to honor Dave for his distinguished service to the Association, the Chamber community, and the people and business owners of the Kankakee Region and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO TERECIA WILSON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ms. Terecia Wilson on the occasion of her retirement from the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Since 1984, Ms. Wilson has worked to improve highway safety in South Carolina, and as a result of her extraordinary service, all South Carolinians are safer on our state's roads. She has been an invaluable resource to me and my staff over the years, and we will miss working with her.

Most recently, Ms. Wilson has served as Training, Safety and Security Program Manager for the Office of Public Transit in the Division of Intermodal and Freight Programs for the South Carolina Department of Transportation, SCDOT, managing the statewide Rural Transit Assistance Program. From 1999 to 2007, Ms. Wilson served as Director of Safety at SCDOT. In this capacity, she developed, implemented, and administered roadway and occupational safety programs to improve safety for highway workers and drivers alike, as well as administering management, claims, and toll operations for the agency. Before joining SCDOT, she served at the South Carolina Department of Public Safety, where she, among other responsibilities, coordinated the 402 State and Community Highway Safety Program, managed numerous successful highway safety public information and education programs, and sought and secured millions of dollars in needed funding.

Ms. Wilson's many years of service have produced impressive results. South Carolina's mileage death rate plummeted from 3.7 per 100 million miles of travel in 1986 to its lowest recorded level of 1.65 in 2010. In 2005, Ms. Wilson worked closely with state legislators when they passed primary seat belt legislation; in 2008, South Carolina's safety belt usage rate climbed to 79 percent, the highest rate ever recorded. SCDOT's High Visibility Work Zone Safety Program had dramatic results during its three-year duration from 2002 to 2005, with a 39.2 percent reduction in work zone crashes, a 44.1 percent reduction in work zone injuries, and a 50 percent reduction in work zone fatalities. It is no exaggeration to say that Ms. Wilson's work has saved lives.

Throughout her career, Ms. Wilson has garnered national recognition for her able service. In 1991, she received a Special Recognition Award from the National Traffic Safety Administration, NTSA, for promoting and implementing a statewide education and enforcement campaign. In 1992 and 1999, she received the NTSA's National Award for Public Service. She received the Award of Merit from the National Sheriffs' Association in 1993 for promoting and implementing the Rural Sheriffs' Traffic Safety Initiative. In 2004, she was named the winner of the President's Transportation Award by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Three years later, the "Let'em Work, Let'em Live" campaign, which Ms. Wilson directed, was awarded the National Roadway Safety Award by the Federal Highway Administration and National Roadway Safety Foundation. South Carolinians are proud to see one of our own. so well regarded by her colleagues around the country, and we are fortunate that her exemplary service has been to our benefit.

Ms. Wilson is a proud wife and mother, and I know that she is looking forward to being able to spend more time with her family in retirement. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House join me in congratulating Ms. Terecia Wilson on this well-deserved retirement. I wish her good health and godspeed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote Nos. 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote Nos. 152, 153, 158, 159, 160, 161, 163, 169, 171, 175, 176. I would have voted "no" on rollcall vote Nos. 154, 155, 156, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 170, 172, 173, 177.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 177 I inadvertently missed the vote on rollcall No. 177. I intended to vote "no."

Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ASIAN PACIFIC STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the California Asian Pacific State Employees Association, and their members, as they gather to raise scholarship funds for local high school students. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this generous organization.

The Asian Pacific State Employees Association was founded in 1975 with the goal of assisting its members while they work for the State of California, and to encourage state employees to give back through a variety of community projects. Located in all of the major urban centers in the state, APSEA's members work for a wide variety of California government agencies.

APSEA's annual scholarship dinner raises funds and recognizes numerous young men and women who are involved in rigorous academic studies, dedicate their time to Asian and Pacific Islander causes, or are involved with the Ronald McDonald House Charity. This dinner has provided additional scholarship funds for many local students who are committed to making their community better.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to celebrate this fantastic organization, their members, and their annual dinner. They are a shining example of community service and community pride. I am confident that APSEA will continue the tradition of giving selflessly and helping others with their organization and events, and I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring their outstanding commitment to their community and their continued work to help students succeed.

STOP DENYING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 97th Anniversary of the terrible period of atrocities committed against the Armenian people by the leaders of the Ottoman Empire and immediate subsequent Turkish government that is known as the Armenian Genocide.

Every year I have been in Congress, I have marked this solemn anniversary remembering the victims of this genocide and the expulsion of tens of thousands of Armenians from their homes and homeland, and honoring the survivors of one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th Century. These survivors and their descendants have helped awaken and teach the world to the horrors of genocide and the necessity of standing up to the forces of denial.

This year, however, Mr. Speaker, I come before this House angry and frustrated by the

refusal of my own government to recognize and identify the events from 1915 to 1923 as the Armenian Genocide. It doesn't seem to make a difference if the White House is occupied by a Republican or a Democrat, no one has the political courage to call the Armenian Genocide by name. I am always told that now is not the right time to take such an action.

When will be the right time, Mr. Speaker? When the last survivor, the last eye-witness to the genocide has passed away? Every year, when I join the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide in Worcester, Massachusetts, there are fewer and fewer survivors.

I understand the need for careful political consideration of these matters, but we have waited too long as it is.

It is past time to recognize the Armenian Genocide, by name, Mr. Speaker. I call on the President to do so, now, this year, for the sake of the last survivors of this atrocity and in honor of all of those who perished.

RECOGNIZING THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Church of St. Mary in Hampton Bays, New York as it celebrates one hundred years of ministry and worship. I offer my congratulations to the rector, wardens, vestry and congregation of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, a beautiful and historic church that stands as a testament to the devotion of its members.

From its modest beginnings in the home of Earl B. Squires in 1912 to its present-day position as the first and most active partner in an outreach program to the East End's homeless, St. Mary's has been a vital part of the community. On March 26, 1912, the Reverend Samuel Centennial Fish conducted the first service in the home of Earl Squires opposite the present location of the church at 165 Ponquogue Avenue.

In 1917, Virginia Taylor Hardy donated the property and present church, nestled amid a grove of oak trees, to serve the population of Good Ground, a portion of present day Hampton Bays. Its Norman architecture is accentuated by slate and tile floors, varying peaked tile roofs and English oak pews and paneling. The stained glass windows in the baptistery and above the altar are the work of Otto W. Heinigke, one of the foremost stained glass artists in the country. The church building, recognized as one of the most beautiful small churches in America, was consecrated on September 4, 1920 by the Right Rev. Frederick Burgess, Bishop of Long Island. In 1966, the church was granted parish status after 52 years as a mission.

The current rector, the Rev. Bernadette M. Sullivan, is the first woman to serve as the church's spiritual leader. In 2001, the rector volunteered St. Mary's as the first church to commit to participate in the Maureen's Haven Ministry to the homeless. Many members of the congregation have been inspired to become involved. After ten years, more than 30 other churches are participating in the program providing beds, hot food and counseling for more than 252 guests.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have such a strong and long-standing congregation in the First Congressional District of New York, and I offer best wishes for the future.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2613–S2661

Measures Introduced: Seven bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2339–2345, and S. Res. 432–434. **Page S2655**

Measures Reported:

S. 237, to amend title 31, United States Code, to enhance the oversight authorities of the Comptroller General, with amendments. (S. Rept. No. 112–159) **Page S2655**

Measures Passed:

Surface Transportation Extension Act: Pursuant to the order of March 7, 2012, Senate passed H.R. 4348, to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund pending enactment of a multiyear law reauthorizing such programs, as amended, after striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the text of S. 1813, to reauthorize Federal-aid highway and highway safety construction programs, as amended and passed by the Senate, and pursuant to the order of March 7, 2012, insisted on its amendment, requested a conference with the House thereon, and the Chair was authorized to appoint the following conferees on the part of the Senate: Senators Boxer, Baucus, Rockefeller, Durbin, Johnson (SD), Schumer, Nelson (FL), Menendez, Inhofe, Vitter, Hatch, Shelby, Hutchison, and Hoeven. **Page S2615**

Dia de los Ninos: Celebrating Young Americans: Senate agreed to S. Res. 432, designating April 30, 2012, as "Dia de los Ninos: Celebrating Young Americans". **Page S2660**

National Child Abuse Prevention Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 433, designating April 2012 as "National Child Abuse Prevention Month". **Page S2660**

Measures Considered:

Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1925, to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994. **Pages S2615–16, S2630–34**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, April 25, 2012, and that following the remarks of the two Leaders, the time until 2 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two Leaders, or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first 30 minutes and the Majority controlling the second 30 minutes; provided further, that the Republicans control the time from 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., and the Majority control the time from 12:30 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. **Page S2661**

National Labor Relations Board: Senate continued consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S.J. Res. 36, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to representation election procedures. **Pages S2616–27, S2634–51**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 45 yeas to 54 nays (Vote No. 68), Senate did not agree to the motion to proceed to consideration of the joint resolution. **Page S2634**

21st Century Postal Service Act—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of S. 1789, to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service, taking action on the following amendments and motions proposed thereto: **Page S2634**

Adopted:

Tester Modified Amendment No. 2056 (to Amendment No. 2000), to modify the process for closing or consolidating post offices and postal facilities. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Pages S2637–39**

Coburn Amendment No. 2060 (to Amendment No. 2000), to provide transparency, accountability, and limitations of Government sponsored conferences. (A unanimous-consent agreement was

reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Pages S2639–40**

Wyden Modified Amendment No. 2020 (to Amendment No. 2000), to require the Postal Service to consider the effect of closing or consolidating a postal facility on the ability of the affected community to vote by mail and to provide for a moratorium on the closing or consolidation of post offices and postal facilities to protect the ability to vote by mail. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Page S2641**

Coburn Modified Amendment No. 2058 (to Amendment No. 2000), to improve access to postal services in communities potentially affected by a postal closing or consolidation. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Pages S2641–42**

McCaskill Modified Amendment No. 2031 (to Amendment No. 2000), to prohibit the closing of a rural post office unless certain conditions are met and to establish a moratorium on the closing of rural post offices. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Pages S2643–44**

Snowe Modified Amendment No. 2080 (to Amendment No. 2000), to require the Postal Rate Commission to evaluate area mail processing studies. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Page S2644**

Durbin Modified Amendment No. 2082 (to Amendment No. 2000), to prohibit the Postal Service from closing, consolidating, or reducing the workforce of certain postal facilities. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Pages S2645–46**

Bennet Modified Amendment No. 2047 (to Amendment No. 2000), to establish citizen's service protection advocates, to require the Strategic Advisory Commission on Postal Service Solvency and Innovation to study the advisability of the Postal Service entering into inter-agency agreements with respect to post offices, and to require the Postal Service to develop a strategic plan for entering into such inter-agency agreements. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Pages S2647–49**

Rejected:

By 30 yeas to 69 nays (Vote No. 70), McCain/Coburn Amendment No. 2033 (to Amendment No. 2000), to establish the Commission on Postal Reorganization. (Pursuant to the order of Thursday, April 19, 2012, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S2640–41**

By 33 yeas to 65 nays (Vote No. 71), Coburn Modified Amendment No. 2061 (to Amendment No. 2000), to achieve long-term cost-savings by allowing the Postmaster General to reduce the postal workforce through mandatory retirements for eligible employees. (Pursuant to the order of Thursday, April 19, 2012, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S2642–43**

By 43 yeas to 56 nays (Vote No. 72), Udall (NM) Modified Amendment No. 2043 (to Amendment No. 2000), to strike the limitations on changes to mail delivery schedule, with an offset. (Pursuant to the order of Thursday, April 19, 2012, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S2644–45**

By 46 yeas to 53 nays (Vote No. 73), Akaka Amendment No. 2034 (to Amendment No. 2000), to provide appropriate workers compensation for Federal employees. (Pursuant to the order of Thursday, April 19, 2012, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S2646–47**

By 29 yeas to 70 nays (Vote No. 74), Corker Amendment No. 2083 (to Amendment No. 2000), to improve the bill. (Pursuant to the order of Thursday, April 19, 2012, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Page S2649**

By 57 yeas to 42 nays (Vote No. 75), Akaka Amendment No. 2049 (to Amendment No. 2000), to allow supervisory and other managerial organizations to participate in the planning and development of changes in, or termination of, pay policies and schedules and fringe benefit programs. (Pursuant to the order of Thursday, April 19, 2012, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S2649–50**

By 35 yeas to 64 nays (Vote No. 76), Paul Amendment No. 2025 (to Amendment No. 2000), to end the mailbox use monopoly. (Pursuant to the order of Thursday, April 19, 2012, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S2650–51**

Pending:

Reid (for Lieberman) Modified Amendment No. 2000, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S2634**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 62 yeas to 37 nays (Vote No. 69), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion

to waive pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions with respect to Reid (for Lieberman) Modified Amendment No. 2000, in the nature of a substitute. Subsequently, the point of order that the amendment was in violation of section 201(a) of S. Con. Res. 21, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2008, was not sustained. **Page S2637**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at 2 p.m., on Wednesday, April 25, 2012. **Page S2661**

Appointments:

U.S.-Japan Interparliamentary Group Conference: The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Section 5 of Title I of Division H of Public Law 110–161, appointed the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the U.S.-Japan Interparliamentary Group conference for the 112th Congress: Senator Murkowski. **Page S2660**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Pages S2654, S2660–61**

Executive Communications: **Pages S2654–55**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2655–57**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2657–59**

Additional Statements: **Pages S2653–54**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S2659**

Privileges of the Floor: **Pages S2659–60**

Record Votes: Nine record votes were taken today. (Total—76)

Pages S2634, S2637, S2641, S2643, S2645, S2647, S2649–51

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:03 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 25, 2012. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2661.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development approved for full committee consideration an original bill making appropriations for Energy and Water Development for fiscal year 2013.

MF GLOBAL

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the collapse of MF Global, focusing on lessons learned and policy implications, after receiving testimony from Jill E. Sommers, Commodity Futures Trading Commission; Robert Cook, Director, Division of Trading and Markets, United States Securities and Exchange Commission; James W. Giddens, Trustee for the Securities Investor Protection Act Liquidation of MF Global Inc., and Louis J. Freeh, Trustee of MF Global Holdings Ltd., both of New York, New York; Richard G. Ketchum, Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Rye, New York; and Terrence A. Duffy, CME Group Inc., Chicago, Illinois.

ONLINE VIDEO

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the emergence of online video, focusing on if it is the future, after receiving testimony from Barry Diller, IAC, and Susan D. Whiting, Nielsen, both of New York, New York; Paul Misener, Amazon.com, Washington, D.C.; and Blair Westlake, Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, Washington.

WATER AND WILDLIFE BILLS

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife concluded a hearing to examine S. 810, to prohibit the conducting of invasive research on great apes, S. 1249, to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to facilitate the establishment of additional or expanded public target ranges in certain States, S. 2071, to grant the Secretary of the Interior permanent authority to authorize States to issue electronic duck stamps, S. 357, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to identify and declare wildlife disease emergencies and to coordinate rapid response to those emergencies, S. 1494 to reauthorize and amend the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act, S. 1266, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to build on and help coordinate funding for the restoration and protection efforts of the 4-State Delaware River Basin region, S. 2156, to amend the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act to permit the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, to set prices for Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps and make limited waivers of stamp requirements for certain users, S. 2282, to extend the authorization of appropriations to carry out approved wetlands conservation projects under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act through fiscal year 2017, after receiving testimony from Senators Begich and Udall (CO); Dan Ashe, Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior; James Anderson, Director, Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives, National Institutes of

Health, Department of Health and Human Services; Martin Wasserman, former Maryland Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, Ellicott City; Douglas B. Inkley, National Wildlife Federation, Reston, Virginia; and Greg Schildwachter, Watershed Results LLC, Arlington, Virginia.

INVESTIGATING AND CONVICTING FRAUD

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine fraud, focusing on investigation and conviction, and what steps can be taken to further deter fraud, after receiving testimony from Daniel R. Levinson, Inspector General, and Peter Budetti, Deputy Administrator and Director, Center for Program Integrity, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, both of the Department of Health and Human Services; Wifredo A. Ferrer, United States Attorney, Southern District of Florida, Department of Justice; and Kathleen King, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office.

LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on African Affairs concluded a hearing to examine United States policy to counter the Lord's Resistance Army, including S. 2318, to authorize the Secretary of State to pay a reward to combat transnational organized crime and for information concerning foreign nationals wanted by international criminal tribunals, and S. Res. 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, after receiving testimony from Senator Landrieu; Donald Yamamoto, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs; Earl W. Gast, Assistant Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development; Amanda J. Dory, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs; Jolly Okot, Invisible Children, Kampala, Uganda; and Jacod Acaye, Gulu District, Uganda.

IMMIGRATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees and Border Security concluded a hearing to examine the constitutionality and prudence of state and local governments enforcing immigration law, after receiving testimony from former Senator Dennis DeConcini; Arizona State Senator Steve M. Gallardo, and Todd Landfried, Arizona Employers for Immigration Reform, both of Phoenix; and Russell Pearce, BanAmnestyNow.com, Mesa, Arizona.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 141 public bills, H.R. 4480–4620; and 4 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 118–120; and H. Res. 630 were introduced. **Pages H2064–67**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2071–72**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Culberson to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2041**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:10 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H2042**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest chaplain, Reverend Joel Osteen, Lakewood Church, Houston, Texas. **Page H2042**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:14 p.m. and reconvened at 4:30 p.m. **Page H2045**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Providing for the release of the reversionary interest held by the United States in certain land conveyed by the United States in 1950: H.R. 2947, to provide for the release of the reversionary interest held by the United States in certain land conveyed by the United States in 1950 for the establishment of an airport in Cook County, Minnesota; **Pages H2048–49**

Modifying the boundaries of Cibola National Forest in the State of New Mexico: H.R. 491, to modify the boundaries of Cibola National Forest in the State of New Mexico and to transfer certain Bureau of Land Management land for inclusion in the national forest; and **Pages H2049–50**

Facilitating a land exchange involving certain National Forest System lands in the Inyo National Forest: H.R. 2157, to facilitate a land exchange involving certain National Forest System lands in the

Inyo National Forest, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 376 yeas to 2 nays, Roll No. 178.

Pages H2046–47, H2051

Recess: The House recessed at 5:02 p.m. and reconvened at 6:45 p.m. **Page H2050**

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed:

Authorizing the conveyance of two small parcels of land within the boundaries of the Coconino National Forest: H.R. 1038, amended, to authorize the conveyance of two small parcels of land within the boundaries of the Coconino National Forest containing private improvements that were developed based upon the reliance of the landowners in an erroneous survey conducted in May 1960; **Pages H2045–46**

Idaho Wilderness Water Resources Protection Act: H.R. 2050, to authorize the continued use of certain water diversions located on National Forest System land in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness in the State of Idaho; and **Pages H2047–48**

Lowell National Historical Park Land Exchange Act of 2012: H.R. 2240, amended, to authorize the exchange of land or interest in land between Lowell National Historical Park and the city of Lowell in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. **Page H2050**

Meeting Hour: Agreed that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow for morning hour debate and 1 p.m. for legislative business. **Page H2051**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H2045.

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote developed during the proceedings of today and appears on page H2051. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Committee Meetings

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee began a markup of the "Gasoline Regulations Act of 2012"; and the "Strategic Energy Production Act of 2012"; and proposed matters for inclusion in reconciliation recommendations.

AMERICA IS UNDER CYBER ATTACK: WHY URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Management held a hearing entitled "America is Under Cyber Attack: Why Urgent Action is Needed". Testimony was heard from Gregory C. Wilshusen Director, Information Security Issues, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE'S GUIDANCE ON ACCESS TO POOLS AND SPAS UNDER THE ADA

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on the Constitution held a hearing entitled "The Department of Justice's Guidance on Access to Pools and Spas Under the ADA". Testimony was heard from Christa Bucks Camacho, Senior Executive Service Candidate, Development Program, Social Security Administration; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25, 2012

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: business meeting to consider the 2012 Farm Bill, 9 a.m., SR–328A.

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold closed hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2013 for national and military intelligence programs, 10:30 a.m., SVC–217.

Subcommittee on Financial Service and General Government, to hold hearings to examine expanding broadband access, promoting innovation, and protecting consumers in a communications revolution, focusing on fiscal year 2013 resource needs for the Federal Communications Commission, 2:30 p.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Personnel, to resume hearings to examine the Active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian personnel programs in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2013 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2 p.m., SD–106.

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, to hold hearings to examine current readiness of U.S. forces in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2013 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–232A.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, to hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2013 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC–217 following the open session, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation and Community

Development, to hold hearings to examine helping homeowners save money through refinancing, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine tax reform, focusing on what it means for state and local tax and fiscal policy, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: business meeting to consider an original bill entitled ''Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act'', and the nominations of Deborah S. Delisle, of South Carolina, to be Assistant Secretary of Education for Elementary and Secondary Education, Bonnie L. Bassler, of New Jersey, to be a Member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation, and Adam Gamoran, of Wisconsin, Judith D. Singer, of Massachusetts, Hirokazu Yoshikawa, of Massachusetts, and David James Chard, of Texas, all to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the National Board for Education Sciences, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: business meeting to consider S. 2218, to reauthorize the United States Fire Administration, and for other purposes, S. 241, to expand whistleblower protections to non-Federal employees whose disclosures involve misuse of Federal funds, S. 2061, to provide for an exchange of land between the Department of Homeland Security and the South Carolina State Ports Authority, S. 1673, establish the Office of Agriculture Inspection within the Department of Homeland Security, which shall be headed by the Assistant Commissioner for Agriculture Inspection, and for other purposes, S. 2170, to amend the provisions of title 5, United States Code, which are commonly referred to as the ''Hatch Act'' to eliminate the provision preventing certain State and local employees from seeking elective office, clarify the application of certain provisions to the District of Columbia, and modify the penalties which may be imposed for certain violations under subchapter III of chapter 73 of that title, S. 1998, to obtain an unqualified audit opinion, and improve financial accountability and management at the Department of Homeland Security, H.R. 3902, to amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to revise the timing of special elections for local office in the District of Columbia, H.R. 2668, to designate the station of the United States Border Patrol located at 2136 South Naco Highway in Bisbee, Arizona, as the ''Brian A. Terry Border Patrol Station'', S. Res. 419, expressing the sense of the Senate that public servants should be commended for their dedication and continued service to the United States during Public Service Recognition week, H.R. 298, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 500 East Whitestone Boulevard in Cedar Park, Texas, as the ''Army Specialist Matthew Troy Morris Post Office Building'', H.R. 1423, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 115 4th Avenue Southwest in Ardmore, Oklahoma, as the ''Specialist Micheal E. Phillips Post Office'', H.R. 2079, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 10 Main Street in East Rockaway, New York, as the ''John J. Cook Post Office'', H.R. 2213, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 801 West Eastport Street in Iuka, Mississippi, as the ''Sergeant Jason W. Vaughn Post Office'', H.R. 2244, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 67 Castle Street in Geneva, New York, as the ''Corporal Steven Blaine Riccione Post Office'', H.R. 2660, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 122 North Holderrieth Boulevard in Tomball, Texas, as the ''Tomball Veterans Post Office'', H.R. 2767, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 8 West Silver Street in Westfield, Massachusetts, as the ''William T. Trant Post Office Building'', H.R. 3004, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 260 California Drive in Yountville, California, as the ''Private First Class Alejandro R. Ruiz Post Office Building'', H.R. 3246, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 15455 Manchester Road in Ballwin, Missouri, as the ''Specialist Peter J. Navarro Post Office Building'', H.R. 3247, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1100 Town and Country Commons in Chesterfield, Missouri, as the ''Lance Corporal Matthew P. Pathenos Post Office Building'', H.R. 3248, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 112 South 5th Street in Saint Charles, Missouri, as the ''Lance Corporal Drew W. Weaver Post Office Building'', and the nominations of Tony Hammond, of Missouri, to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission, Mark A. Robbins, of California, to be a Member of the Merit Systems Protection Board, and Roy Wallace McLeese III, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, 9:30 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Homeland Security, 9:30 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Rules and Administration: to hold hearings to examine S. 219, to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form, 9:30 a.m., SR–301.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold hearings to examine Veterans' Affairs mental health care, focusing on evaluating access and assessing care, 9:30 a.m., SD–138.

House

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Rural Development, Research, Biotechnology, and Foreign Agriculture, hearing entitled ''Formulation of the 2012 Farm Bill: Rural Development Programs'', 2:30 p.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations: Full Committee, markup of Energy and Water Appropriations Bill FY 2013; and report on the suballocation of Budget Allocations for FY 2013, 1 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Replacing the Sequester'', 10 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee, markup of the ''Gasoline Regulations Act of 2012''; and the ''Strategic Energy Production Act of 2012''; and proposed matters for inclusion in reconciliation recommendations, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee, hearing entitled ''LRA, Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, AQIM and Other Sources of Instability in Africa'', 9:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, hearing entitled ''Confronting Damascus: U.S. Policy Toward the Evolving Situation in Syria, Part II'', 1:30 p.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, hearing entitled ''Western Hemisphere Budget Review 2013: What Are U.S. Priorities?'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, hearing entitled ''Oversight of U.S. Policy Toward Burma'', 2:30 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, hearing on H.R. 3361, the ''Utilizing DNA Technology to Solve Cold Cases Act of 2011'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Courts, Commercial and Administrative Law, hearing on H.R. 4377, the ''Responsibly And Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2012'', 12 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Full Committee, markup of Committee Print of Material to be Transmitted to the Committee on the Budget Pursuant to Section 201 of H. Con. Res. 112; and H.R. 365, the ''National Blue Alert Act of 2011'', 1:30 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, markup of the following measures: H.R. 460, the ''Bonneville Unit Clean Hydropower Facilitation Act''; H.R. 919, the ''Mohave Valley Land Conveyance Act of 2011''; H.R. 1237, to provide for a land exchange with the Trinity Public Utilities District of Trinity County, California, involving the transfer of land to the Bureau of Land Management and the Six Rivers National Forest in exchange for National Forest System land in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, and for other purposes; H.R. 1272, the ''Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Judgment Fund Distribution Act of 2011''; H.R. 1818, the ''Mt. Andrea Lawrence Designation Act of 2011''; H.R. 2467, the ''Bridgeport Indian Colony Land Trust, Health, and Economic Development Act of 2011''; H.R. 2489, the ''American Battlefield Protection Program Amendments Act of 2011''; H.R. 2621, the ''Chimney Rock National Monument Establishment Act''; H.R. 3874, the ''Black Hills Cemetery Act''; H.R. 4027, to clarify authority granted under the Act entitled ''An Act to define the exterior boundary of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation in the State of Utah, and for other purposes''; H.R. 4222, to provide for the conveyance of certain land inholdings owned by the United States to the Tucson Unified School District and to the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona, and for other purposes; S. 363, to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to convey property of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to the City of Pascagoula, Mississippi, and for other purposes; and S. 925, the ''Mt. Andrea Lawrence Designation Act of 2011'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Health Care, District of Columbia, Census and National Archives; and Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs, Stimulus Oversight and Government Spending, joint hearing entitled ''Is Government Adequately Protecting Taxpayers from Medicaid Fraud?'', 9:30 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules: Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 3523, the ''Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act of 2011'', 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight; and Subcommittee on Healthcare and Technology of the Small Business Committee, joint hearing entitled ''How the Report on Carcinogens Uses Science to Meet its Statutory Obligations, and its Impact on Small Business Jobs'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Aviation, hearing entitled ''A Review of Aviation Safety in the United States'', 9 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Human Resources, hearing entitled ''Moving from Unemployment Checks to Paychecks: Implementing Recent Reforms'', 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Oversight, hearing entitled ''Impact of Limitations on the Use of Tax-Advantaged Accounts for the Purchase of Over-the-Counter Medication'', 2:30 p.m., 1100 Longworth.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 25

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1925, Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. At 2 p.m., Senate will continue consideration of S. 1789, 21st Century Postal Service Act, with several votes on or in relation to amendments and passage of the bill.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, April 25

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of the following bills under suspension of the rules: (1) H.R. 3336—Small Business Credit Availability Act, as amended and (2) H.R. 2146—DATA Act.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Adams, Sandy, Fla., E632
Andrews, Robert E., N.J., E629
Austria, Steve, Ohio, E623
Baca, Joe, Calif., E633
Bilirakis, Gus M., Fla., E627
Bishop, Timothy H., N.Y., E637
Clyburn, James E., S.C., E636
Costa, Jim, Calif., E626
Cuellar, Henry, Tex., E628
Duffy, Sean P., Wisc., E622, E624
Eshoo, Anna G., Calif., E629, E631
Foxx, Virginia, N.C., E633
Hastings, Alcee L., Fla., E623
Johnson, Henry C. ''Hank'', Jr., Ga., E623, E635
Kinzinger, Adam, Ill., E635
Levin, Sander M., Mich., E633
Loebsack, David, Iowa, E629, E634
McGovern, James P., Mass., E633, E636
Matsui, Doris O., Calif., E636
Norton, Eleanor Holmes, D.C., E626, E635
Olson, Pete, Tex., E621, E625, E628, E630
Perlmutter, Ed, Colo., E636
Pingree, Chellie, Me., E621, E624, E628
Richardson, Laura, Calif., E622, E625, E628, E632, E635
Roby, Martha, Ala., E632
Sablan, Gregorio Kilili Camacho, Northern Mariana Islands, E626
Schakowsky, Janice D., Ill., E629, E634
Slaughter, Louise McIntosh, N.Y., E636
Smith, Christopher H., N.J., E624
Speier, Jackie, Calif., E624, E627, E631
Stark, Fortney Pete, Calif., E633
Thompson, Bennie G., Miss., E630
Thompson, Mike, Calif., E621
Van Hollen, Chris, Md., E632
Visclosky, Peter J., Ind., E621
Waxman, Henry A., Calif., E623
Woolsey, Lynn C., Calif., E630, E634

Congressional Record

The *Congressional Record* (USPS 087–390). The Periodicals postage is paid at Washington, D.C. The public proceedings of each House of Congress, as reported by the Official Reporters thereof, are printed pursuant to directions of the Joint Committee on Printing as authorized by appropriate provisions of Title 44, United States Code, and published for each day that one or both Houses are in session, excepting very infrequent instances when two or more unusually small consecutive issues are printed one time. ¶Public access to the *Congressional Record* is available online through the U.S. Government Printing Office at *www.fdsys.gov*, free of charge to the user. The information is updated online each day the *Congressional Record* is published. For more information, contact the GPO Customer Contact Center, U.S. Government Printing Office. Phone 202–512–1800, or 866–512–1800 (toll-free). E-Mail, *contactcenter@gpo.gov*. ¶The *Congressional Record* paper and 24x microfiche edition will be furnished by mail to subscribers, free of postage, at the following prices: paper edition, $252.00 for six months, $503.00 per year, or purchased as follows: less than 200 pages, $10.50; between 200 and 400 pages, $21.00; greater than 400 pages, $31.50, payable in advance; microfiche edition, $146.00 per year, or purchased for $3.00 per issue payable in advance. The semimonthly *Congressional Record Index* may be purchased for the same per issue prices. To place an order for any of these products, visit the U.S. Government Online Bookstore at: bookstore.gpo.gov. Mail orders to: Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197–9000, or phone orders to 866–512–1800 (toll-free), 202–512–1800 (D.C. area), or fax to 202–512–2104. Remit check or money order, made payable to the Superintendent of Documents, or use VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, or GPO Deposit Account. ¶Following each session of Congress, the daily *Congressional Record* is revised, printed, permanently bound and sold by the Superintendent of Documents in individual parts or by sets. ¶With the exception of copyrighted articles, there are no restrictions on the republication of material from the *Congressional Record*.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Superintendent of Documents, *Congressional Record,* U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, along with the entire mailing label from the last issue received.