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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RIBBLE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 10, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable REID J. RIBBLE 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 3, 2013, 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 11:50 a.m.

ELIMINATE THE SEQUESTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, most of us came here to this place to serve the American people and to ensure that the most powerful law-making body answers the needs and the cries of those who cannot speak for themselves, and yet, as we languish in those values, they may be more on paper than they are in action.

I rise today to ask, maybe even plead, that this House puts on the floor H.R. 900, which is to eliminate the sequester from the Budget Reconciliation Act and to go to regular order because the people of the United States are hurting, and even more so, I would say that they are crying.

It's very easy for us to be able to say there is no impact; we see no impact. I hope for those who have been in their districts for the last 2 weeks that they will realize how inaccurate and untrue that is. In fact, it hurts me to see the pain in my constituents' faces and homes because of sequester—a reckless scheme to move Congress to act and it did not work.

Some will say whose fault it was, whose idea it was. We really don't care because right now there are people who have lost Head Start seats, whose parents have been told their children cannot come back to school anymore. Grown men crying—grown men crying because their little one cannot go back to a Head Start class, and they have nowhere else for them to go.

The WIC program that is so desperately needed for women, infants, and children—cut to the bone. This is a scheme that is long overdue for us to get rid of.

Food inspectors. Just recently, a food business was shut down in my district. The thought of it is horrible. Many of their products in our local grocery stores. If we had not had food inspectors from the FDA, which we probably won't have anytime soon because they're being slashed and eliminated, this product would still be on the market. $85 billion in cuts is too nondescript.

The Federal emergency management under Homeland Security, $1 billion being cut, which means those who are still suffering from Superstorm Sandy, many of whom are homeless, 40,000 are still in hotel rooms in New York, they won't be able to be helped.

Department of Transportation, $1.943 billion, and that means the New Starts, mobility, people waiting in line for light rail, jobs cut immediately. I spoke this weekend to FAA members, air traffic controllers. Don't think it's not being felt, and it will be felt more and more in the summer increase of travel because of $637 million in losses, and almost $500 million of that is jobs.

We are in trouble. $512 million cut from Customs and Border Patrol over the international ports of entry. We're talking about comprehensive immigration reform and border security. There's your border security—cutting the very personnel that are ensuring the security of America. That's wrong-headed, and it's time to stop now.

But it really pains my heart, if you will, to see the cuts to those innocent families with those children in Head Start, to see the cuts to workers who have done nothing other than to come to work every morning, those Federal workers, and the impact on contractors to the Department of Defense, work that is forward-thinking in dealing with technology, cut to the bone, slashing employees. We will see the surge of the economy going down.

This is not the fault of the administration. This is the inaction of us in the United States Congress, and I think it is immediately necessary for Speaker BOEHNER to put on the floor of the House for a full debate H.R. 900, eliminate the sequester, simple sentence, and go to regular order. Begin the process of the budget. Whether you like this budget or that budget, begin the appropriate process of appropriations, for if you don't think that we're going to have one of the darkest seasons forthcoming, you wait and see what $85 billion in reckless cuts means. It's a trickle-down effect. You cannot recoup. Jobs will not come back, and we were moving up, creating jobs.

Everybody wants to point the finger as to whose fault it is, and I believe it is something where we have to come together.

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I want to finish on the note that medical research funded by the National Institutes is also being cut, and we were number one in medical research. The time is now. Get rid of the sequester and help the American people.

BUREAUCRATIC CODESPEAK

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let's say I take one of my 10 grandkids, Barrett Houston, to a basketball game he is playing in. He gets hit in the face with a basketball, so we go to the doctor to see if his nose is broken. The doctor asks Barrett Houston this question: Is this the first time you've been hit in the face with a basketball, the second time, or do you have a habit of being hit in the face by a basketball? Barrett says, I don't know. Doctor says, I've got to know because, you see, I've got this codebook here, and the law requires that I make sure I put in the codebook the way you were hurt by the basketball and how many times because there are five codes for being hit in the face by a basketball. And let's say he doesn't know. Well, the doctor has to be accurate in how he diagnoses being hit in the face by the basketball or the doctor's in trouble.

Let's say I take another one of my grandsons, Jackson, to go hunting, but he happens to get assaulted by a wild turkey. We go to the doctor, and the doctor says, Hey, I've got to know exactly how you were hurt by that turkey because there is a code for being assaulted by a turkey for the first time. There is a code for being assaulted by the turkey a second time. There is a different code for being pecked by a turkey rather than being bitten by a turkey. There are nine codes. The doctor must get the right code or he is in violation of the law about being assaulted by that turkey. It seems nine codes for a turkey assault is a bit silly.

□ 1010

Right now, Mr. Speaker, there are 18,000 of these codes. Doctors must be accurate when they fill out the diagnosis of a patient who comes and sees them.

Stay with me, Mr. Speaker.

Soon, there will be 140,000 of these medical codes that doctors must get right or they're in trouble by the Federal Government. The new code system is called ICD–10. For example, you're injured at a chicken coop; that's code number Y9272. You are injured at an art gallery, you fall down; that's Y92250. There are even three new codes for being injured when you walk into a lamppost. You walk into a lamppost for the first time, that's one code; you walk into a lamppost for the second time, that's a different code; you walk into a lamppost habitually, that is even a different code. And the doctor must get it right, because he's in violation of Federal regulators if he doesn't get it right.

The doctors I've talked to say this is an expensive distraction from treating patients. Well, no kidding. It's red tape, it's bureaucracy, and this is what happens when clueless Big Government here in Washington starts telling people out in the workplace—doctors and patients—what they must do. And when the government intrudes into our lives with more regulations, the government continues to make things more complicated. It finds problems in every solution.

Doctors are really in the business of helping the sick and the injured and saving lives. Do they really have the time and money to translate a complicated 140,000-codebook when they diagnose everything that happens? But they don't have a choice. If they miscode, they do not get paid. Even more so, they face the threat of being fined by the Federal Government.

There's more. To set up this new 140,000-code philosophy, it's going to cost an average single practitioner doctor $80,000. Now, isn't that lovely? If it's a practice of 5 to 10 people, that's going to cost that practice $250,000 to comply with Federal regulations, the new codebook.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, when regulators go to work every day down the street in one of these big office buildings, they sit around a big oak table, they pull out their lattes and their iPads and they ask the question to each other: ''Who shall we regulate today?'' They type out a few regulations and send it out to the fruited plain and the masses. They don't care about the cost or the effect or whether the regulations make any sense; they just do it anyway. And we have to deal with it.

These new codes are not going to make one sick person well, but yet doctors must comply with these new codes or the code police are going to punish them. Doctors want to take care of patients, but the Federal Government is forcing 140,000 complicated, unreasonable new codes on all of us that are hard to decipher. Maybe we should sequester these new codes. Where are those World War II code breakers when we need them most?

And that's just the way it is.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I welcome the President's budget submission, which will mark the first time since 2009 that the House, the Senate, and the President have all submitted budgets. It's an encouraging development, but the larger question is whether Congress can actually use the budgeting process to show how we will do business differently.

Despite the media sideshows about the artificial sequestration crisis, the major issues we have to address to fix the budget and our current deficit are spending on defense, health care, and the tax system itself.

Although the administration has started us down a path to manage Pentagon spending in the future, we have barely scratched the surface. There are too many unnecessary bases at home and abroad that should be phased down or closed. There's far too much invested in an antiquated nuclear arsenal that we haven't used in 68 years and contains many, many times more weapons than we would ever need for deterrence. The $700 billion scheduled to be spent over the next 10 years must be reduced dramatically. We have yet to come to grips with the long-term costs of an all-volunteer Army and the right balance between reserve and regular forces. Until these fundamental issues are addressed, the challenges of the future are going to be difficult to face because we spend too much time and energy and money preparing for the conflicts of the past while we avoid hard budget reality.

Health care expenditures continue to be the greatest overall threat to the budget, but not because the United States doesn't spend enough money on health care. We spend more than anybody else in the world—twice as much as many countries. But even spending far more than anybody else, we're still not able to deliver quality health care for most Americans. Instead of fighting health care reform, we should be working together to accelerate that process so that we can reward value over volume of health care. If the Oregon model of health care that we are working on diligently to implement were applied on a national scale, it could save over $1 trillion over the next 10 years—as much as was fought about in the battle over sequestration.

We must also reform the Tax Code, which is unfair, complex, and costly, with over $160 billion just to administer it. I would suggest that we think about implementing a carbon tax, which has the potential of reducing the deficit and tax rates for individuals and business in a fair and comprehensive form. The carbon tax has the added benefit of being the most direct way to reduce the threat to the planet caused by extreme weather events promoted by carbon pollution.

It's very encouraging that the President's budget again speaks to infrastructure improvement and investment, but we need to be bolder and more comprehensive in our approach, especially at how we deal with funding rebuilding and renewing America. At a time when 17 States have stepped up to increase transportation funding, it's unacceptable that we pay for the highway trust fund with a gas tax that hasn't been increased since 1993 and is increasingly collecting less money as fuel efficiency improves.

The introduction of the President's budget is an important step forward. It

will hopefully spark an earnest, thoughtful, focused discussion about how we do business differently, how we pay for the needs of a growing and aging America, and how we can get more value for the investments we are already making, all while laying the foundation for a more prosperous future.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. When I was home, like most Members, during the Easter break, I had the opportunity to read in the Raleigh, North Carolina, paper an article that just really took me backwards. The title of the article is: ''Iran Is Victor in Post-War Iraq.'' The first paragraph says:

> Ten years after the United States-led invasion to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, the geopolitical winner of the war appears to be the common enemy: Iran.

Mr. Speaker, I think most of us in the House know that 25, 30 years ago, our Nation supported Saddam Hussein when he was fighting the Iranians. This is what frustrates the American people. We create a bad policy; we continue to support a bad policy. It makes no sense.

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to speak to the inspector general for the Iraq Project, and when I get the report, I would maybe like to share more information. Just for example, approximately $11.7 billion in waste, fraud, and abuse. What makes this so ironic is that the Iranians are possibly becoming the beneficiaries of this money. The taxpayers now are spending money in Iraq that could possibly be going into the coffers of the Iranian people. I guess that makes sense to most of my colleagues, but it doesn't to me.

I encourage the American people to go to www.costofwar.com. If you can get it on the Internet, you need to see it. The American people need to understand what is happening in Afghanistan and Iraq. You will see a combined total of $1.4 trillion, and it's a running total. It doesn't stop; it doesn't pause; it just keeps running. So there we go again. Poor Uncle Sam can't take care of his bills, but we're going to take care of these foreign countries. It makes no to sense to me.

Mr. Speaker, a total of 6,656 American troops have died in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, not to mention the thousands of civilian lives lost and the veterans who return home physically and mentally wounded. Whether it's in Iraq or Afghanistan, we cannot continue to spend money that we don't have and neglect the American people.

□ 1020

I hope the people of this country and my fellow colleagues share my outrage and my concern, because it would be almost a sin if we continue to spend this money without any accountability or very little to speak of.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I visited a soldier from my district in North Carolina. He was at Walter Reed Hospital at Bethesda. His father called me 4 months ago and said, I really would appreciate if you would see my son. He's lost a leg. He's lost fingers. He's badly burned.

Mr. Speaker, it was humbling to go to Walter Reed yesterday and see this young corporal, but he is what makes America great. His attitude is excellent, not complaining about his injuries, and I just pray to God that we will realize that if we don't stop spending the money we don't have that young men and women like the corporal in the years to come will not get benefits because we will be financially broke. That will be a sin, and I hope it never happens.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will be back next week. I will have the inspector general's estimate on the cost to stay in Iraq for 2 more years, and I hope to have some figures I can leave and put in the RECORD, because it is time that we have a debate on our foreign policy right here in the House of Representatives. Maybe we will in May. I hope so.

With that, Mr. Speaker, as I always do, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform, in His loving arms to hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

I ask God to bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is rights in the eyes of God for God's people today and God's people tomorrow.

I ask God to please bless the President, that he will do what is right in the eyes of God for God's people today and God's people tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, three times, God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.

FOLEY CELEBRATES 30TH SEASON WITH BLACKHAWKS

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Chicago Blackhawks television announcer Pat Foley, who is celebrating his 30th season with the team. As the voice of the Blackhawks, Pat has come to define the Chicago hockey experience. In fact, it's impossible to imagine watching stars like Jonathan Toews or Pat Kane without his play-by-play running through your head.

The hockey bug bit Pat early in his life. As a child at bedtime he would hide his radio underneath his pillow from his parents, Rob and Mary, so he could listen to his broadcasting idol, Lloyd Pettit, a great in his own right, call Blackhawks games, but only the last two periods.

Much like the players, themselves, Pat worked his way up to the Stanley Cup winning team, calling baseball and hockey games at his alma mater Michigan State before landing his first professional job with the Grand Rapids Owls of the International Hockey League. Pat joined the Hawks broadcast team in 1980 at just 25 years of age and has been a fan favorite ever since. The Glenview native has earned two Emmy Awards for his work and was inducted into the Chicagoland Sports Hall of Fame, joining broadcast legends Jack Brickhouse and Harry Caray. He's also been active in the local community helping numerous charities, and he recently joined me on the ice in a game with wounded warriors from the USA Warriors team.

For his hard work and dedication and for making some of the greatest moments in Blackhawks history even more memorable, I say thank you to Pat Foley. Lloyd Pettit would be proud. And, of course, go Hawks.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You know, in the midst of talking about immigration reform, which I think is something that we're going to be addressing very shortly and something we ought to address very shortly, I want to just come forward and share an experience I had over the last week.

I'm still a pilot in the Air National Guard. That's a job I've kept while I've been in the Congress and a job I hope to continue to keep. Part of what I did last week is I actually went and worked on the border with the Air National Guard. We do an ISR—intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance—looking for people that have crossed illegally into our country and, frankly, looking for drugs and things along that line. It was a unique trip for me, because most times when Congressmen go to the border, they actually probably would go in an official capacity as a U.S. Congressman. We've all experienced these trips. You see what the administration, frankly, wants you to see. So they take you somewhere like El Paso where there's a very effective fence in place.

But where they don't take you is a place called Mac Pump. Mac Pump is in McAllen, Texas, one of the areas that I worked in my capacity as an Air National Guard pilot, and it really was actually kind of disheartening what we would see. You'd see folks cross the Rio Grande, that would stand in the United States of America. As we would call Border Patrol to come and assess the situation, they would literally step back and put their ankles in the water and at that point they are unapprehendable. And they would stare, 5 feet away from U.S. Border Patrol, and maybe a hundred yards away then another group, knowing that our Border Patrol agent was tied up, would

then cross the Rio Grande and make it free. Or they'd outlast the Border Patrol agent and then they'd step back onto U.S. territory and then the agent would come back. They'd play this cat and mouse game. It could easily be solved with a border fence. It could easily be solved with actually real border security.

This isn't border security that we're going to do because we're upset, because we're angry, but because I believe that we have to have real immigration reform in this country. Things like high-skill visas are very important, but allowing people who want an opportunity to come to the United States to do so through a legal process.

The problem that we have set up now, though, and really frankly the sad part about it is a lot of these immigrants believe that the second they set foot in the United States of America, everything's going to be good. Everything's going to be all right. And we agree. This is the greatest country in the world. The problem is once many of these immigrants step into the United States of America, their journey has just begun, because the other part of where I worked in this mission over the last week was about 50 to 100 miles inland in Texas, as we would find people hunkered down in moss, very thick brush, as they would try to wade and rely on their guides. In many cases their guides would vacate when they'd hear Border Patrol, and they'd run away from these groups of people hiding in the brush and would leave them stranded in the middle of the Texas plains without water, without food, without any knowledge of where they're going. In fact, in this sector I was working last year, there were 200 dead bodies found, and that's only a fraction of those that actually die on this journey.

So I believe that border security is important so that we can set up a situation in which those that want to come here legally can do so and can go through the legal process of living in the United States or eventually becoming a United States citizen, and we're not creating a situation in which many of these immigrants are coming and frankly losing their lives.

I've talked to Border Patrol, and the interesting thing is now I did it out of the capacity as a U.S. Congressman, although of course they knew what I did in my other job, and I said, if I could take one thing back to Washington, what would it be? And they said, if you take back one thing to Washington, tell them that even though the Secretary is saying that the border is secure, even though the administration is saying the border is secure, it is not secure. Take that back. We need more border patrol agents, we need the fence, we need the ability to do our job. They're prevented from doing legal things that are humane to apprehend in many cases folks running with dope and trying to escape, giving them the opportunity to do what they need to do.

So, Mr. Speaker, I agree with those that are saying we need immigration reform in this country, and I'm a believer in that. I believe it's time that we understand and talk about the fact that America is a nation built of immigrants. My third or fourth generation ahead of me came over from Germany. I respect that and I appreciate it, and I think it's a tradition we need to continue. But I believe the first step to real immigration reform is border security. And I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, my trip to the border for a week as a pilot in the Guard opened my eyes to the fact that we are continually exposing ourselves not just to dope and drugs being run into this country but into a potential of a terrorist attack on the United States and a weapon that was run through the border of Mexico, because it's done every day.

END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, my grandmother used to say an apple a day keeps the doctor away. I hated it when she said that, but you know, Mr. Speaker, she was right. Good, nutritious food will keep you healthy. That's because food is medicine. Fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods like beans, legumes, grains and proteins are critical for proper development. Simply put, healthy people eat healthy food.

The opposite is also true. The more junk food we eat, the less healthy we are. But there are different reasons why people eat less nutritious food. Many people choose to eat non-nutritious food, but there are many others who cannot afford to buy healthier options. These low-income households have to stretch their food dollars in order to make ends meet.

□ 1030

This requires them to buy less nutritious, high-calorie foods that are more affordable on a fixed income. This is why we can have an obese hungry person. They're filling their stomachs with food that isn't good for them, simply because it's all they can afford or all they have access to.

This kind of diet has long-term negative effects on individuals and on the communities where they live. Mr. Speaker, when we talk about ways to End Hunger Now, we must look at the way the quality of food, or the lack of quality, is impacting hunger in America.

In a 2011 report entitled, ''Hunger in America: Suffering We Are All Paying For,'' the Center for American Progress estimated that the health costs for hunger were at least $130 billion each year. $130 billion a year, just for health costs related to hunger.

The authors of the report examined medical research and found that there are serious medical consequences directly related to hunger. Specifically, this research found that there is likely to be higher rates of iron deficiency, headaches, stomach aches, frequency of colds, activity-limiting health impairments, specific nutrient deficiencies, more hospitalizations, longer inpatient stays, and poorer overall health status.

Along with these physical health issues, there are also mental health conditions attributable to hunger, including anxiety and irritability, depression, withdrawn behavior, psychosocial dysfunction, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, and a need for mental health services.

The response is clear, Mr. Speaker. We must treat hunger as a health issue. It frustrates me that we in Congress still act like it's a better option to spend over $130 billion in hunger-related health costs than to actually prevent hunger in the first place.

Last month, in March, ProMedica and the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease released a white paper called, ''Addressing Hunger Essential to Improving Health.'' This paper details how critically important it is to treat hunger as a health issue. The white paper points out that hungry people of all ages, from pregnant women to children to adults to seniors, suffer from a lack of nutrients found in healthy foods. The lack of nutrients results in serious health issues, the very same health issues that cost our Nation over $130 billion in health care costs alone. That's nuts.

Doctors and nurses should be looking for signs of hunger in their patients. Medical students should have more courses on nutrition. They should be treating hunger just like any other condition. If someone has high blood pressure or a rash, they get a prescription to treat that problem. Doctors should be writing food prescriptions, if that's what it takes, to get nutritious food to the food insecure.

Health care organizations like ProMedica in Ohio and Michigan, UMass Memorial in Worcester, Massachusetts, and Children's Health Watch in four locations, including Boston Medical Center and Drexel University, are trying to right this wrong. They promote health and wellness in general, but they are also treating hunger as a health issue. They are working to reduce the number of hospital readmissions by including food security in their patients' discharge plans. They want to make sure that people don't need to be readmitted to a hospital because they suffer from a setback simply because they don't have food to eat once they leave the hospital. They are also working to raise awareness about nutrition and exercise and to increase access to healthier food in underserved areas.

Mr. Speaker, we need to learn from these organizations and others. That's why I believe it is so important that the White House convene a conference on food and nutrition. We are not going

to end hunger now if we don't bring the best and the brightest minds together in one place, including doctors, nurses, nutritionists, dietitians, and other health professionals. We need a national plan of action, and the best way to begin is with a White House conference.

Mr. Speaker, we know that healthy food builds healthy bodies. We know that by ignoring hunger, our Nation pays hundreds of billions of dollars in health care costs. We know that nutritious food is good medicine for body and mind.

Mr. Speaker, in the United States of America, the richest, most prosperous nation on Earth, hunger should not be an issue. We need to come together, Mr. Speaker. We need to come together now. We need the President to lead on this. We need to come together and end hunger now.

CANCER PATIENT PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. ELLMERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss H.R. 1416, the Cancer Patient Protection Act of 2013.

On April 1, 2013, the Obama administration reduced Medicare payments to the costs of cancer-fighting drugs. This is having a devastating impact on seniors fighting cancer and the Nation's cancer care delivery system, which is already in crisis.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, CMS, said that it does not have the authority to stop these devastating cuts to lifesaving chemotherapy drugs. That's why yesterday I introduced the Cancer Patient Protection Act of 2013, H.R. 1416, to ensure seniors, especially those on lower or fixed incomes, get the treatment they need.

The cuts the Obama administration is choosing to implement will jeopardize patient access to cancer care and result in higher overall costs for both seniors and the Medicare program by forcing patients into costlier hospital treatment settings.

The United States enjoys the most respected and most successful cancer care delivery system in the world. More than 60 percent of U.S. cancer patients rely on Medicare; and, until recently, over 80 percent of the Nation's cancer patients were treated by physicians in the community setting.

According to recent studies by Milliman and Avalere, community oncology clinics provide the most cost-effective model for delivering high-quality cancer services to elderly Americans. Despite this, a series of changes to Medicare reimbursements over the past decade have imperiled these vital innovations. The administration has decided to apply the sequester cut both to payments for part B drugs and to the 6 percent services payment.

A recent survey done by the Community Oncology Alliance shows the CMS cuts will force 72 percent of community cancer centers to stop seeing new Medicare patients, or not see Medicare patients without secondary insurance, and/or send Medicare patients elsewhere for treatment, such as costly hospitals, where treatment costs more.

When community cancer centers are forced to close their doors or limit services, access to cancer care is compromised for all cancer patients, especially the vulnerable population of seniors who rely on Medicare and those on fixed incomes and lower income individuals whose options are already limited.

Fortunately, the Secretary of Health and Human Services has the authority to protect against further destabilization of the community cancer care safety net.

The Office of Management and Budget, OMB, directed all Federal agencies to "use any available flexibility to reduce operational risks and minimize impacts on the agency's core mission in service of the American people" and to "identify and address operational challenges that could potentially have a significant deleterious effect on the agency's mission or otherwise raise life, safety, or health concerns."

Further, the Social Security Act compels the Secretary to adhere to the Average Sales Price-based formula that Congress established under the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003. The Social Security Act expressly mandates that the Secretary reimburse physicians at 106 percent of ASP for office-administered drugs, providing detailed directions to the Secretary on how to calculate the average sales price.

Congress has distinguished the Medicare drug payment methodology, and these provisions warrant deference under sequestration and guidance from the OMB.

By passing this bill, we are ensuring that everything can be done to prevent these cuts from going into effect. I encourage my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of comprehensive immigration reform.

I would like to thank my colleague from Illinois, who spoke earlier about his experience, saying that he believes in comprehensive immigration reform. I do, too. I just wish that when he was asked, or when he asked the Border Patrol agent, "If there was one thing you could bring back to Congress, one thing, what would it be?" I wish that that gentleman would have said his Bible, because that's what he should have said, "Bring your Bible. That will give you the best guidance. Bring your Bible."

I believe, Mr. Speaker, I'm allowed to read from the Bible. Is that correct? No one will come and tackle me? I'm new at this. It's my first year here, and I hope I'm not violating any law. But if I am, I'm going to do it anyway.

I would like to read from Matthew 25, because Matthew 25 speaks to the judgment. I think it's very important for us to read this section.

□ 1040

It reads like this:

> When the Son of Man comes in His glory, escorted by all the angels of Heaven, He will sit upon His royal throne and all the Nations will be assembled before Him, and then He will separate them into two groups as a shepherd separates sheep from goats. The sheep He will place on His right hand, the goats on His left. The King will say to those on His right, "Come. You have my Father's blessing. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you welcomed me.

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Who is the stranger? Who is the stranger among us that we welcome? I'll tell you who the stranger is among us who we welcome. The stranger is the wife of the soldier that we spoke to 3 weeks ago here in Washington when he came and he testified and said:

> I'm not afraid of dying in Afghanistan or Iraq. I've been on three tours of duty. What I'm afraid is that my wife will get deported because she's undocumented, and then who will take care of my children?

She is the stranger, the soldier's wife.

Who is the stranger? Who is the stranger among us? Who is this least among us? I'll tell you who it is. It's the child and the parents who are here, where the child is born here. He's an American citizen, but the parents weren't, so the parents can get deported and you break the family apart. We deport the parents and we don't know what happens to the children because they go to strangers. We break this family.

Who is the stranger? Those parents, that child. How we treat them is how we're going to be judged.

We have an opportunity here before us, and I'm very thankful now for the churches in this country. The Catholic Church for many years has been saying, We need humane, comprehensive immigration reform. They've said it loud and clear. And now the evangelical churches are out there saying the same thing. God bless them. And I know that they're praying, and I know that my parish is praying that we'll all open our hearts to this.

I have to tell you, I haven't been here long, but I do get the opportunity to pray with my colleagues on the Republican side, and they are great people with great heart, and I hope that God speaks to them at this point in time and says: The stranger is the soldier's wife; the stranger is the child whose parents are going to be ripped away from them. He is, in fact, the people

that died crossing the border because they want a better life for themselves. Those are the strangers. We are going to be judged on how we treat them. So we have an opportunity here.

But also, stepping apart from that, people say, But it's illegal, what they've done is illegal. You know, the law is interesting. I happen to be a lawyer. There are two ways to look at the law. There's the law that says it's malum per se—it's bad or evil in itself. Malum per se in itself. Murder is malum per se. It's always evil, it's always wrong to kill.

On the other side you have malum prohibitum. What is malum prohibitum? Malum prohibitum means it's bad or wrong or illegal because we prohibit it. For example, if you drive 56 miles an hour in a 55-mile-an-hour zone, you've broken the law. Have you done anything illegal? Yes, you have. Have you done anything immoral? No. The road was built to go faster than that, your car was, the brakes are good. You violated the law. What do we often do? In fact we change the law and we say 55 miles an hour doesn't make any sense. We change it to 60 or 65 or 70. I've been through Texas; now it's 75 there. I'm from California. We only have 70. Why? Because the law doesn't make any sense.

Our immigration law doesn't make any sense. So, yes, they've broken the law, but a law that doesn't make any sense. Let's change the law. Let's open our hearts. Let's take this Bible and let's take a look and see what it says to us. What it will say is this: that how we treat the stranger is how we are going to be judged as a Nation.

UNTREATED MENTAL ILLNESS

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

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. While the Senate argues about gun issues and talking about what is in the hands of those perpetrators who commit heinous crimes, I want to talk about America's shameful secret that people don't want to be talking about, and that is our willful ignoring of dealing with mental illness. We have to start talking about not what is in people's hands, but what is in their hearts and minds.

Approximately 5 percent of individuals with schizophrenia will die by suicide during their lifetime, a rate 50-fold greater than the general population. Keep in mind now suicide has overtaken all other areas of accidental deaths. It is now the leading cause of death by injury, about 38,000 per year.

We understand that mental disorders are brain disorders with specific systems that are rooted in abnormal patterns of brain activity. Many of those with psychosis show up between ages 14 and 25 when there are changes occurring in the branching and pruning of brain cells. Yet, there is a delay between the first episode of psychosis and the onset of treatment with an average of 110 weeks before someone gets care. There are 100,000 young Americans who will have a first episode of psychosis this year and will join over 2 million others with schizophrenia.

Look at this: one-sixth of murderers in prison are mentally ill. Here are some other quick facts. The number of murders in the U.S. in 2011 committed with rifles: 323. In 2011, more murders were committed with knives: 1,694; hands, fist and feet: 728; and blunt weapons such as clubs and hammers: 496, according to FBI data.

A while ago I sent a letter to Secretary Sebelius, the Secretary of HHS, seeking clarification of the laws of confidentiality known as HIPAA, specifically asking why we have not loaded 1.5 million more records into the National Instant Criminal Background Check System so that these people cannot purchase guns. I hope the Secretary will respond soon.

Recently, I also handed a note to the President of the United States and will continue to pursue questions with the Government Accountability Office, asking where are we spending our money and is it effective in going to help those with mental illness and severe mental illness. We simply don't know.

In the United States, an estimated 11.4 million Americans, or about 4.4 percent of all adults, suffer from serious mental illness. What happens is that States in many cases do not submit those records to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. There are many States that haven't submitted any at all, and this is a problem because people who should not be purchasing weapons are.

But underlying all of this, we had better take off our blinders and deal with the underlying root cause of mass violence: untreated mental illness. Look at yesterday in the news when a man went on a campus and attacked people with a knife. Look at the other shootings that have taken place by people with untreated or undertreated mental illness. Why aren't we talking about our action on those?

Our current system is especially falling short for those with a serious mental disorder who deny they're ill. Half of those persons with severe psychosis don't even understand they have mental illness. They refuse their medication or simply cannot function in a community setting. So what have we done historically in this country? We've burned them as witches, we imprison them as dangerous. We still have not dealt with the underlying needs.

There were 500,000 psychiatric beds in 1955. There are 40,000 now. We have a lack of long-term treatment options. There are gaps in the care for young adults. There are artificial limits and barriers to care under insurance. Four years ago plus we passed a mental health parity law, and we still do not have the regulations for that.

Parents who are not informed and cannot get their children help or treatment is another problem with HIPAA laws and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which creates barriers between parents knowing what is going on with their children in school when they have a severe mental illness. Of course, there is the stigma of acknowledging there is a problem or getting treatment.

Politicians refer to those committing these murders as evil, as monsters. Television shows where there's tragedy or comedy mock them. This is not the way to deal with the underlying problem. We have a shortage of psychologists and psychiatrists throughout this country and in the military as well, where suicides have overtaken combat as the number one cause of death.

I am asking for an audit from the Government Accountability Office of every single penny spent on mental illness diagnosis, research, and treatment throughout our government, through HHS, through the judiciary, through Labor, every branch. We need to know these answers. It is a shameful secret in this country that we still refuse to deal with mental illness. And if we do not, shame on us.

□ 1050

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE C–SPAN STUDENT DOCUMENTARY CONTEST

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, most Americans watching these proceedings today are watching them on C–SPAN. C–SPAN is a public service that was created by the cable industry in 1979 to carry our House proceedings and other public affairs programming. It's carried in my district by DirecTV, Comcast, and the DISH Network.

I won't bore you with all of the content that appears on C–SPAN. Some is very interesting and some is not. Nevertheless, every year C–SPAN holds a student documentary contest for middle school and high school students.

Today, I am proud to announce that one of my constituents, a young man named Samuel Gladden, a 10th grade student at Miller Grove High School in Lithonia, received $250 for his honorable mention documentary: ''Education: The Greatest Common Factor,'' about how education is related to the economy.

I also want to congratulate Mr. Zach Cohen, a seventh grade student at the Alfred & Adele Davis Academy in Sandy Springs, Georgia, who received $1,500 for the second prize, a documentary entitled: ''Education: Take a Spin,'' which is about education in the United States of America. He interviewed me for this piece, and I want to thank him for doing that.

I want to congratulate both Zach and Samuel for winning these prizes out of nearly 2,000 entries.

You can see these and other winning videos at studentcam.org. I would encourage everybody, once you finish watching C–SPAN, to go to studentcam.org. It will captivate you to see what these young students have done and to listen to their views on education and on how our future will be affected by either our investment in education or in our desire not to do that.

SECURITY IN ENERGY AND MANUFACTURING ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Security in Energy and Manufacturing Act of 2013.

This bill will extend the Advanced Energy Manufacturing Tax Credit program. The program provides a 30 percent tax credit, or a grant in lieu of a tax credit, to companies that are constructing, expanding, or retrofitting their facilities that manufacture renewable energy.

We have seen our manufacturing base erode as a result of increased global competition. Not only will the SEAM Act help us rebuild our manufacturing industry; it will also provide an opportunity to do so while exploring responsible energy production. Energy innovation is quickly becoming one of the world's largest industries; and countries all over the world are purchasing billions of dollars' worth of wind turbines, solar panels and other green technologies. I want to see these products made in the United States and for our country to remain competitive.

We know this program works. The first allocation of funding was extremely successful in leveraging private capital, and that led to the investment of over 180 energy manufacturing facilities across 43 States in our country. The number of wind turbines and their workable components made in the U.S. has more than doubled since then, and that is just one aspect of the renewable energy field.

Expanding this program also means creating additional high-tech, high-wage manufacturing jobs in our own backyard. Companies like Tempe's Monarch Power could expand and increase the creation of innovative products, ranging from energy generation to energy storage, even a mobile renewable power system—all while remaining affordable. We must partner the power of American innovation with the potential of American production. My bill encourages just that.

In my home State of Arizona, renewable energy enjoys broad bipartisan support. Democrats and Republicans, including Barry Goldwater, Jr. and our own Governor, Jan Brewer, have advocated for solar and renewable energy because they know that the future of our State and the future of our country depend on it. I stand today with a broad coalition of leaders from my State who have a long history of supporting energy innovation as a smart investment for America.

We have the opportunity to restore U.S. manufacturing jobs, to help our country remain competitive in the manufacturing industry and to invest in a wide range of clean energy production. I ask that the body join me in supporting the SEAM Act of 2013.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 56 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

The Members of Congress are powerful people. Their words bear weight and their positions before the people deserve respect. Therefore, they need to be steeled from arrogance on one side and casual routine on the other.

Lord, only the two-edged sword of Your Word and Your purity of Spirit can bring freshness to their spirits and confirming hope to their constituents. Strengthen their pledge to uphold the Constitution against blatant and subtle attacks and to serve the people with all their hearts.

Then may their speech, their decisions, and their working together within the pluralism of this democracy be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. GABBARD 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, we all want to prevent gun violence, but anything we do must start by respecting the Second Amendment.

Sadly, a Member of this House ignored that constitutional right last week. She claimed that banning certain kinds of gun magazines would somehow stop killers from killing. She actually said that if Congress would ban gun magazines, they will simply disappear as they're used up. Of course, that's not true. You see, gun magazines are reloadable, much like a stapler.

Mr. Speaker, I hope I can be an asset to my colleagues who may not know how guns work. As a gun owner and an Air Force veteran myself, I've actually exercised my Second Amendment rights. Perhaps those of us who understand the subject matter should lead the effort to stop gun violence.

My colleague's poor understanding of guns will lead to poor policy. Here's some reading material to help bring her up to speed. It's called the Second Amendment. It says, ''The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.''

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I too adhere to the Second Amendment, as all of us do. I can assure the gentleman that anything we do with sensible gun legislation that will protect the lives of babies whose lives were lost in Newtown and Aurora and Virginia Tech and Columbine will be fair and just. I hope my colleagues in the Senate will hear from those of us who are sending him a letter: no filibuster, but real gun-sensible legislation.

Let me turn to the budget and indicate that it is important that we rid ourselves of the sequester and ask the Speaker to put on the floor H.R. 900. I think it is good that the President has saved dollars out of the Iraq and Afghan war of over $1 billion and provided security for embassies and $222 million for gun legislation enforcement, but we must not have to change CPI.

Many people don't realize that in this instance of Social Security seniors are paying more money for health care.

They will not be able to compensate. Those who are poor and vulnerable will be worst off after the changed CPI.

I join with many, many Members of the United States Congress to say we can make Social Security solvent, Medicare solvent and Medicaid solvent, but we must not have to change CPI. I oppose it and many others.

TAX CODE

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, April 15, the dreaded tax day, is almost here. According to the nonpartisan Tax Foundation, Americans will have to work 108 days this year just to be able to pay their taxes—108 days. That's just not right, and Americans are sick of it. The good news is Congress has a chance to do something about it this year.

So what would the average American want to see in a new Tax Code?

One, lower tax rates on individuals and businesses, with an assurance that those rates would remain low;

Two, no ridiculous special interest loopholes or giveaways, especially those that have nothing to do with creating jobs; and

Three, making sure that everyone pays their fair share.

If Congress aims for these goals, Americans should get a Tax Code that encourages work and investment, resulting in economic growth and job creation.

And let's not forget, we cannot allow any future growth-generated revenue to be spent on wasteful government programs. Instead, the revenue should go toward eliminating the deficit and then paying down our debt.

Let's cut spending, lower our deficit, and fix our loophole-ridden, work-penalizing, and jobs-killing Tax Code once and for all.

MAKE IT IN AMERICA

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, later today, I will join House Democratic Whip STENY HOYER to announce our Make it In America agenda, a legislative package that will help reinvigorate our manufacturing sector and grow American manufacturing jobs. These bills will help to put our country back to work by helping to create good-paying jobs, the kind of jobs that built the American middle class of this country.

Earlier this year, I introduced one such proposal, the Make It In America Manufacturing Act, which establishes a competitive grant program that will help small- to medium-sized manufacturers retool their facilities and retrain their workers to compete in the 21st century.

Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND of New York has introduced a companion bill in the Senate that is cosponsored by Senators JACK REED and SHELDON WHITEHOUSE. These are the kinds of commonsense proposals that we need to support if we are going to get our economy back on the right track and get folks back to work.

I urge my colleagues to support the Make It In America agenda, and I look forward to joining Whip HOYER for his announcement this afternoon.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET

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

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, President Obama's budget is 65 days late and trillions of dollars short. And while his plan contains plenty of tax increases, budgetary gimmicks, and stimulus-style spending, it fails to adequately address our Nation's unsustainable deficits and debt. In fact, the President's budget would never balance.

I share President Obama's view of a thriving middle class and strong manufacturing base, but the policies put forth in his budget show the White House is more focused on increasing the size of government than growing the private sector. If the President is truly serious about building a 21st century economy, then he should work with House Republicans in eliminating the roadblocks to innovation and entrepreneurship. That means reducing government red tape, creating a fairer and flatter Tax Code, and ending the deficit spending.

I urge the President to join us in putting forth sound policies that will grow jobs and put our country back on a sustainable path.

□ 1210

WESTERN NEW YORKERS WILL FIGHT FOR WHAT THEY DESERVE

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, in western New York, we don't expect anything to be handed to us. History has taught us that we have to fight for what we deserve. Our community just won two recent victories against Federal bureaucracies by standing up and demanding better.

When the Veterans Administration decided to cancel the Golden Age Games just 2 months before they were to be held in Buffalo and stick our community with a $2.2 million loss, the community fought back. Last week, the VA reversed its decision and announced that the games would proceed as planned.

When the Army Corps of Engineers decided to prohibit access to Squaw Island Pier in Buffalo, a popular fishing destination on the waterfront, we pushed back hard. This morning, I met with Corps officials. They assured me that public access to the site would continue.

Western New Yorkers won two victories in 2 weeks because we stood up for ourselves. Let this be a lesson to our community and a warning to the Federal bureaucracy: when you make senseless decisions that hurt western New York, you're going to have a fight on your hands.

FATHER EMIL KAPAUN

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

Mr. POMPEO. It is an honor today to tell you about one really good man. He was born in Pilson, Kansas, and later became an ordained priest in Wichita in 1940.

This very good man, a fellow named Emil Kapaun, served as a military chaplain during World War II and again in September 1948, this time entering the Korean battlefield with his unit, the 3rd Battalion of the 8th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st Cavalry Division.

There we saw what comes of a good man when placed in dangerous times. Father Kapaun became a hero. He died after saving hundreds of lives on the battlefield and in a prisoner of war camp, having dedicated himself to the physical and spiritual health of his fellow prisoners for a very long time.

Tomorrow, President Obama will bestow upon Father Kapaun, this very good man, the Medal of Honor, America's highest military honor.

I want to take this moment to recognize his fellow POWs who never wavered in an effort to secure this medal for Father Kapaun, to the Catholic Diocese of Wichita, and everyone else who has worked so hard for this recognition.

Finally, I want to thank the fellow Members of this body who supported my provision in the NDAA to allow a waiver for the statutory time exception so that he could receive this award.

Father Kapaun is a true American hero, a hero of mankind and so deserving of this Medal of Honor.

PLEASANT GROVE BASKETBALL

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

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pleasant Grove High School boys basketball's team for recently winning the Division 1 State Championship.

In their hard-fought victory, they displayed sportsmanship and teamwork and became the first local team to host the Division 1 State Championship.

When forward Matt Smreker was asked about the victory, he told reporters:

We don't have the biggest names, but we play hard and together with great chemistry, and we won because we're a team.

Matt was right, the Eagles won because they were accountable to each other. The dedication and commitment of the players, coaches, fans, and parents made this victory possible.

The teamwork displayed by the Pleasant Grove boys basketball team is an example for Washington. In Congress we need to work together and hold each other accountable and work as a team.

Congratulations again to the Eagles for your tremendous victory.

THE DISTINGUISHED WARFARE MEDAL

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, our country has a proud history of honoring our military heroes, and in doing so we place an emphasis on recognizing servicemembers whose actions placed them in harm's way for the benefit of our Nation and their fellow soldiers.

It's because of this proud history that I have serious concerns about the Department of Defense placement of a newly established Distinguished Warfare Medal in the order of precedence. Surely it is appropriate to recognize servicemembers who make contributions through technology-driven warfare; however, I agree with the VFW that we must continue to preserve the sanctity of our medals for those Americans who sacrifice their personal safety for the safety of the country and their brothers in arms.

That is why I strongly support the effort led by my friend, Congressman DUNCAN HUNTER, who is a decorated veteran himself, to alter the rank of the Distinguished Warfare Medal such that it ranks below the Purple Heart in precedence.

I would encourage all of my colleagues to join me by cosponsoring his bill, H.R. 833, and urge its passage.

AFGHANISTAN

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, last week I had the chance to visit Afghanistan to get a firsthand perspective of the status of our withdrawal, as well as to visit some of our deployed Hawaii troops.

Our servicemembers continue to serve with the highest level of professionalism, selflessness, and integrity. I'm grateful to them and their families for their unwavering coverage and sacrifice.

Our military and civilian personnel in Afghanistan are committed to the ongoing transfer of responsibility for security to the Afghan National Security Forces. The Afghan forces are made up of warriors who are ready to fight and who are already leading a majority of the security operations, building confidence in their ability to withstand the Taliban and insurgency threats.

The U.S. drawdown is crucial for our military and our resources to focus on addressing imminent and direct threats like North Korea. Along with Guam and Alaska, Hawaii's families have been placed in the crosshairs of this threat. We cannot be complacent. We must take action to ensure that our families and assets are protected and defended.

THE BUDGET

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the President finally decided to join the budget discussion today. Good. It's high time he got off the sidelines.

The contrast between the President's budget and the balanced House Republican budget is stark. The President relies on stimulus and taxes; House Republicans rely on government-spending restraint and reform to achieve economic growth. If recent history is any indication, we chose the better path.

Examine this President's track record of growing the economy: government spending is up, workforce participation is down; national debt is up, family take-home pay is down. If President Obama's trillion-dollar stimulus didn't work, how is a shallow imitation going to help us now? The President's budget will never balance and will yield an endless string of deficits.

The Republican Path to Prosperity requires Washington to make due with a little less and keeps money in the private sector where it can be invested in job creation, expansion, and real economic growth.

The American people waited 65 days for the President's budget. They deserve more than stimulus and taxes.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it's now been 829 days since I arrived in Congress, and the Republican leadership has not allowed a single vote on serious legislation to address our unemployment crisis. Mr. Speaker, I'm devastated by this because the American people are devastated.

Unemployment is depriving people of health care, higher education, and even food and shelter. Does this sound like a civilized Nation?

Mr. Speaker, the American Society of Civil Engineers gave the U.S. a failing grade for infrastructure. We have no shortage of shovel-ready public projects that can put people to work, but this Congress is unwilling to act.

Mr. Speaker, our mantra should be: jobs, jobs, jobs.

□ 1220

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

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

Mr. MESSER. The President's budget proposal reportedly would cap the amount of money people could save in individual retirement accounts. This is a very bad idea. More than a third of people aged 55 and older are not saving for their retirements. Three-quarters have saved much less than they will need to retire comfortably.

We should be encouraging people to save. We need to encourage people to take more responsibility for their future well-beings instead of discouraging sound financial planning. We need to incentivize self-reliance instead of government dependence. This proposal fails on all of these fronts.

Rest assured, Mr. Speaker, the White House has said that the savings cap will allow ''substantially more than is needed to fund reasonable levels of retirement saving.'' My constituents don't need the President deciding what is reasonable for them in their retirements. They don't need him deciding anything else for them either. We need sensible reform.

IMPACTS OF THE SEQUESTER

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

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. I rise today to address the sequester.

Many of those in this House have been telling their constituents that the sequester doesn't make any difference, that nothing has really changed; but that simply is not true.

For example, a cut to the Federal Aviation Administration's budget will result in the furloughing of most of FAA's 47,000 employees, or at least one day per pay period through the end of the fiscal year. Even those employees who provide safety-critical services, like systems specialists and aviation safety inspectors, will be subject to the furlough. As much as 10 percent of the FAA's workforce could be on furlough on any given day, resulting in reduced air traffic control, longer delays and economic losses for air transportation, tourism, and the economy as a whole.

Last week, I visited Lynn Evans-Biga, the executive director of the Luzerne-Wyoming County Head Start in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, an agency which serves 1,000 students and has a waiting list of 700 already. It will have to accept 49 fewer students because of the 5.2 percent sequester cut.

CONGRATULATIONS TO FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY

(Mr. DESANTIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, I am here to congratulate a team that captivated the Nation with style, swagger, heart, and class. I'm talking about four letters that few people have ever heard of until just March—that is FGCU—put on the map by their men's basketball team. As a Representative and servant of southwest Florida, I am so proud to have Florida Gulf Coast University in my backyard—our backyard, our home—now known as ''Dunk City.''

The men's basketball team and the university itself have only been around for, basically, a few years. Heck, the players are actually older than the school itself. Now, this was only FGCU's second year of Division 1 eligibility, and in their second year they went all the way to the sweet 16—busting brackets, knocking down threes and, of course, representing Dunk City with a total of 148 dunks this year.

I am proud to represent Dunk City. I am proud of our young team and our young campus of Florida Gulf Coast University, and we all look forward to another stunning season next year.

FOSTERING MIDDLE CLASS PROSPERITY

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, we need to focus on fostering middle class prosperity, and I feel investing in job training and education is the best way to do that.

We recently had an opportunity to revamp the Workforce Investment Act. However, the consolidation approach that was taken with that bill was counterproductive. That legislation could have been a bipartisan effort. Instead, it has gone to the Senate to die.

So I propose, instead of belittling Federal employees, attacking unions and repealing environmental protections, why don't we focus on working together across the aisle and doing what we can to equip people with the skills and the education they need to fill the job openings that are out there.

That might sound warm and fuzzy, but that is what Americans want us to do. My constituents have told me again and again: let's focus on practical solutions to the problems people are facing, not political ideology.

FIXING AMERICA'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

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

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Yesterday, Dylan Quick, a 20-year-old student at Lone Star College in Texas, went on a rampage with a knife, hurting more than a dozen people. He told police he had fantasized since elementary school about stabbing people to death.

Tucson shooter Jared Loughner told his psychologists that he wished he had been taking his anti-psychotic medication. If he had been, Loughner, who has schizophrenia, says the Tucson shooting might not have happened.

A psychiatrist treating James Holmes told campus police a month before the Colorado theater attack that Holmes had homicidal thoughts and was a danger to the public. Holmes also exhibited signs of schizophrenia.

Those with mental illness are generally more likely to be the victims rather than the perpetrators of violence, but those with untreated mental illness are at increased risk of violent behavior. Ten percent of all homicides are committed by individuals with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and other psychotic illnesses.

When will we acknowledge that it is not just what is in the killer's hand that makes him dangerous, be it fist, knife or gun, but what is in his mind? We must take off the blinders and acknowledge the importance of the diagnosis of mental illness and severe mental illness. Let's fix our mental illness system.

MARKING 30 YEARS OF SAN RAMON

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

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Tonight, San Ramon celebrates its 30 years as an incorporated city.

It's a city I know well. My mother grew up there, and my grandfather was the editor of the Valley Pioneer newspaper. I went to elementary school there, and I coached youth soccer there for years.

Americans first came to San Ramon in 1850 when Leo and Mary Jane Norris purchased property there. The name ''San Ramon'' came from a Native American sheep herder in the area named Ramon. For many years, agriculture was a key part of San Ramon's economy. Starting in the 1960s, suburban development began there; modern San Ramon emerged; and the population took off. Eventually, the residents voted to incorporate as a separate city.

It has grown from about 4,000 people in 1960 to over 70,000 today. It's the fourth largest city in Contra Costa County. It is the location of the headquarters of 24-Hour Fitness and Chevron, and it is the west coast headquarters of AT&T. Both of its high schools, California High School and Dougherty Valley High School, were ranked by U.S. News & World Report as being in the top 200 California high schools. These are just a few examples of the highly educated, hardworking folks who live in San Ramon.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM

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

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing the people of Minnesota understand, it's hockey.

That's why I'm so excited to be able to be here today to congratulate the St. Cloud State University men's hockey team. They're making history. Never before in their history have they advanced to the Frozen Four. I'm here to congratulate them for the first time in the program's history. It has taken talent; it has taken teamwork; it has taken dedication; and the men on this team have shown it all.

I know I speak for all of the people back home in St. Cloud when I say we are extremely proud of these young men and what they've already accomplished. The Cinderella story is going to take place tomorrow evening. It has captivated the community. We can't wait to cheer them on when they take on Quinnipiac in the Frozen Four.

So congratulations. Good luck. Go Huskies.

SEQUESTER

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, we are back from a 2-week recess in the district. Everyone must have been told or seen the impacts of the sequester.

When the sequester went into effect a little over a month ago, people did not see its immediate impact. Now it's different. Many of them, and us, were hoping that the continuing resolution would take care of the sequester, but it did not. Now many of them, and us, are hoping that the President's budget—unlike the Ryan budget, the Republican Study Caucus, or the minority budget in the Senate, which kept the sequester in place—will repeal the sequester.

We know for hospitals like those at home that have large numbers of Medicare patients a 2 percent cut to Medicare is devastating; we know our friends who are still struggling with the recovery from Hurricane Sandy will be affected by the $1 billion cut to FEMA; and for our Federal employees, the furloughs to cover the sequester will affect not only them and their families but our local economies. We need to recognize that slashing with the sequester is not the answer, but also know that we need to reduce our deficit sensibly.

□ 1230

AMERICANS WANT A BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, the President released his February 2014 budget proposal this morning, and now for the first time in over 4 years, the House and the Senate and the President all have submitted budget blueprints showing their priorities for getting our Nation's finances back in good standing.

In the House, our budget balances within 10 years by slowing the growth of government, responsibly and carefully reforming Federal spending, while strengthening and preserving Medicare and Social Security for future generations. And the House budget pays down the national debt to zero within our lifetimes.

Just 12 weeks ago, taxes went up on every American; yet, unfortunately, the President's plan raises taxes again on Americans while increasing spending, growing the size of government, and never, ever balancing.

Mr. Speaker, the American people want balance in Congress, and they want a balanced budget. As we go forward, let's do our job and control spending. Let's balance our own books, and let's stop the constant push for higher taxes on the American people.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded not to traffic the well while another Member is under recognition.

PROTECTING EARNED BENEFITS

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

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to set the record straight here with regard to Social Security and Medicare:

First of all, neither one of them are responsible for the debt and the current fiscal crisis that we find ourselves facing;

Secondly, neither of them are entitlements. They're earned benefits that people started paying for the very first day, the very first hour they went to work, and they have every right to expect those benefits;

Thirdly, there are some long-term problems with both, and they should and need to be fixed, but they can be done, clearly, without reducing the benefits.

Let me remind all of us that nothing has done more in this country to lift more people out of poverty than Social Security, and nothing has done more to add more life and more years to life than Medicare.

Mr. President, my fellow Members, we must stand up for Social Security and Medicare and protect those benefits going forward.

CONTROLLING GOVERNMENT SPENDING

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

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, this morning was a remarkable time. The President, even though it's 65 days late, came out with a budget today. And it is interesting to note that it is about $600 billion of new taxes, after we've just had a $620 billion tax increase on this economy, with the health care bill, about another $1.2 trillion of new taxes and fees, and his budget proposal increases the size of government 50 percent over the next 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, I've been home for the last couple of weeks talking to constituents, and what they tell me is the fact that they want a balanced budget. The President's budget never gets to balance. Our budget does. They want a balanced budget. They want us to get control of spending in Washington because they know how it affects themselves, their families, and the future of this country.

The spending coupled with all of the new regulations, the health care mandates coming down on small businesses, they are stopping job growth. We have got to get some common sense in this House.

SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, sequestration has been in effect for 41 days, and already it is hurting American families. Just outside my district at Fort Knox, more than 5,000 civilian employees face at least 2 weeks of furlough because of these indiscriminate cuts in Federal spending.

A constituent of mine whose husband is a military technician for the Kentucky National Guard said her family will lose close to 20 percent of their income because of furloughs. He is one of at least 460 technicians in my district who will be furloughed.

I've talked with a school principal who's forced to lay off special education teachers because of sequestration. I've met with local social service organizations who are concerned that sequestration will eliminate entire Federal grant programs, jeopardizing jobs and essential services for Louisville families. And officials at the University of Louisville are worried that cuts to their research will interrupt lifesaving medical advances.

Mr. Speaker, sequestration was a threat, not a policy. That's why I voted against it. It now is clear that the real threat of sequestration is to middle class families who can least afford another recession. Congress should enact a budget that eliminates sequestration and spares even more American families the pain of this ill-advised austerity.

A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, we've all heard the statement ''a day late and a dollar short.'' Well, the President is now 2 months late with his budget and billions of dollars short. It's clear, this President wants to balance the increase of government on the backs of the American people. He believes that government needs the resources more than hardworking Americans.

We put forward a budget to be able to protect our senior citizens, to be able to build for the future for our children. The real approach, when we're talking about balance, is to have a budget that truly balances.

This administration continues to grow government, continues to waste the hardworking dollars of the American taxpayer.

Let's stand up and put politics aside and stand up for the people of this country and put forward a budget that will truly put America back to work.

CREATING JOBS

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today about the urgent need to create jobs and grow our economy, an issue that should be our number one focus right now. We are nearly a month and a half into the sequester, which has imposed painful cuts to defense, transportation, and education, and it's hurting our economy.

I'm disappointed the House Republican leadership chose the path of the sequester rather than working with House Democrats to stop these needless, across-the-board cuts. I'm also disappointed that House Republicans have chosen the politics of brinksmanship and government shutdowns rather than negotiate a compromise with Democrats.

We must stop politicizing every function of government from the debt ceiling to the budget. Creating jobs and strengthening our economy starts with the private sector and government working together to ensure confidence and investment across the country.

I encourage all of my colleagues to come together and focus on jobs. Let's work on legislation that helps our constituents obtain jobs and grows our economy.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

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

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, prescription drug abuse is killing more people in this country than car wrecks. It's hard to believe, but it sneaked up on us.

In my district 10 years ago, we started an organization called UNITE, Unlawful Narcotics Investigations, Treatment and Education, a holistic approach, and it works. We've put in jail about 4,000 pushers. We've got drug counselors in schools. We've got clubs in schools to entertain young people on nice things to do and the like, drug courts in every county. It works, but the problem persists.

Last week, I had the great honor and pleasure of helping host in Orlando, Florida, a drug summit on prescription drug abuse, almost a thousand people from 49 States and several foreign countries focusing on the problem. It's the second year we've done that, the second straight year. Mayor Bloomberg was there. The head of CDC was there, the head of FDA, heads of all sorts of Federal organizations, and we're determined to help wipe out this big killer in this country.

□ 1240

CELEBRATING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF KEVIN KRIGGER

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, when the horses line up in Churchill Downs for the running of the Kentucky Derby next month, all eyes in the U.S. Virgin Islands will be on young Kevin Krigger, a jockey from my home island of St. Croix, who will be riding the horse, Goldencents.

We're all proud of Kevin, who grew up in LaVallee and attended Central High School. Kevin always wanted to be a jockey and grew up in the sport, riding horses on our beaches and country roads, challenging anyone he could to a race.

Before he was recruited by other Virgin Islanders who race in the States, he was well known on the tracks of St. Croix, St. Thomas, and Tortola as a talent to watch. He proved himself riding on the west coast, in particular, at Emerald Downs in Seattle, Washington, before his historic win on Saturday at the Santa Anita Derby.

On Saturday, Kevin Krigger became the first African American to win the Santa Anita Derby. Last fall, he was the first African American jockey to win a million dollar race in Louisiana's Delta Jackpot. If he rides Goldencents to victory in the Kentucky Derby next month, he will become the first African American to do so since 1902.

Mr. Speaker, Kevin Krigger's family and fans in the Virgin Islands will be cheering wildly on the first Saturday in May. I congratulate his mother, Averil Simmonds, and his father, Albert Krigger, Jr. We're all proud of this young man and his accomplishments, and wish him Godspeed in this and all of his future endeavors.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, you can't spend more money than you bring in. That's a fairly simple concept, isn't it? But apparently not for Democrats who run the administration in Washington.

Under President Obama, we've had 4 years of government spending, each year spending over $1 trillion more than we took in. That kind of spending is not only irresponsible, it's dangerous. It drives up the national debt, hurts families, neighbors, and our friends.

The time to rein in Washington spending is now, a concept so obvious it has become a cliche. House Republicans understand this. That's why we passed a responsible budget that keeps our taxes low and balances spending. That's more money in your family's pocket.

The President is going to introduce a budget that doesn't balance and tries to raise taxes again.

House Republicans know the way forward, a way forward to foster a healthier economy and help create jobs. It's time for the President to get serious about this issue as well.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 678, BUREAU OF RECLAMATION SMALL CONDUIT HYDROPOWER DEVELOPMENT AND RURAL JOBS ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 140 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 140

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 678) to authorize all Bureau of Reclamation conduit facilities for hydropower development under Federal Reclamation law, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except: (1) those received for printing in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII dated at least one day before the day of consideration of the amendment; and (2) pro forma amendments for the purpose of debate. Each amendment so received may be offered only by the Member who caused it to be printed or a designee and shall be considered as read if printed. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During the consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

This resolution provides for a modified open rule for the consideration of H.R. 678, the Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act, and provides for 1 hour of general debate, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources.

It makes in order all amendments which were preprinted in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and which otherwise comply with the rules of the House. So this modified open rule is very fair, it's a generous rule, and it will provide for a balanced and open debate on the merits of this particular bill.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased to stand before the House and support this rule, as well as the underlying legislation, H.R. 678, which is the long title I gave earlier.

I appreciate the hard work of the bill's chief sponsor, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), as well as the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), and of the subcommittee of jurisdiction, Mr. MCCLINTOCK of California, for allowing this bill to move forward from the committee and continuing the Natural Resource Committee's record, under Chairman HASTINGS' leadership, of furthering several important pieces of legislation which, if enacted, will greatly improve our Nation's energy policies and provide a responsible, balanced approach to further domestic energy development.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I thank the gentleman from Utah for yielding me the customary 30 minutes and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, last Friday we received the news that the economy had only added 88,000 jobs in the month of March. The percentage of unemployed Americans dropped, but that is almost entirely because thousands of workers have given up looking for jobs at all.

This slowdown is a warning to Congress, but we won't take it, I feel sure, since we've pretty much ignored it. Unless this majority reverses the spending cuts contained in the sequester, the health of our economy is only getting worse.

Months ago, economists were warning that the sequester will stall out our economy and lead to job loss, and as we can see by the March data, their predictions are beginning to come true.

With economic warning bells beginning to toll, one would expect Congress to make job creation our number one priority. But one would certainly be wrong because we haven't done that at all. Unfortunately, such expectations don't even come close.

Instead of working on legislation to grow our economy and to create some good-paying jobs, we are wasting valuable session time discussing yet another bill that went nowhere in the last Congress, and I predict will go nowhere in this one as well. But we seem to have the time to waste.

The majority has decided that erasing environmental regulations for hydropower companies is a better use of time than putting Americans back to work and to help families pay their bills.

Furthermore, the bill before us today is a solution in search of a problem that does not exist. Despite the rhetoric of the majority, small conduit hydropower projects are rarely delayed because of environmental regulations. In fact, from 2006 to 2010, 13 exemptions were completed in less than a year, and in 2011 there were nine exemptions that were granted in an average of 40 days.

In addition, changes within the last year have made the process even easier for hydropower developers. Under the new regulations by the Bureau of Reclamation, all a developer has to do to avoid a full environmental assessment is to get a simple, 1½ page form filled out with 15 boxes to check ''yes'' or ''no.'' That is certainly not a burdensome regulation. All they have to do is check the box ''yes'' or ''no,'' indicate the project is not in an especially sensitive area.

Most small conduit hydropower projects will easily pass this test because the reclamation sites are already developed. But despite what you may hear, there is little evidence that there is even a problem with hydropower regulation that needs to be solved.

Contained within today's legislation is a proposal to clarify the lines of authority between the Bureau of Reclamation and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. This is a worthwhile effort that would receive bipartisan support, and we made that very clear. Standing alone, though, this proposal could pass on suspension within a matter of minutes. That would, of course, leave us with nothing to do here today, so here we are.

During the debate in the Natural Resources Committee, the majority was given the opportunity to agree to the noncontroversial and bipartisan parts of the legislation and drop their partisan attacks on environmental safeguards.

□ 1250

Unfortunately, the majority has once again rejected this chance for productive compromise and chosen the partisan path. And as a result, we are here spending time debating another partisan bill that will not pass the Senate and turning our back on the pressing economic needs of this country.

I've said many times on the floor during rules debates that CBS News had estimated it costs $24 million a week to run the Congress of the United States. And it has been embarrassing that we do so little work. But for millions of Americans, the luxury of the time that we take here is something they cannot afford.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the underlying legislation so we can get back to the task of growing our economy, repealing the sequester, and creating American jobs.

I reserve the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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 such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), the sponsor of this piece of legislation, to explain why it is so necessary that we do this, even though on paper it seems like this problem is solved.

Mr. TIPTON. I thank Chairman BISHOP for yielding.

When we're talking about job creation in this country, I think it's worthy to note I just traveled through the Third Congressional District of Colorado visiting with people from Pueblo to Alamosa, Durango, Cortez, Montrose, Craig, Hayden, and Steamboat. One of the greatest challenges that they face is regulations coming out of Washington when it comes to job creation.

The fact of the matter is we're spending $1.75 trillion per year for businesses to be able to comply with government mandates. Is it a sensible approach to be able to look at regulations that simply don't work and are inhibiting job creation and our ability to be able to achieve the most carbon-free, environmentally friendly legislation that we can have? That's hydropower. That is a sensible approach.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in favor of House Resolution 140 and for an open discussion on how we're going to be able to work together to be able to promote clean, renewable hydropower development in rural America and create much-needed jobs in the process. At a time when our country needs to be able to focus on domestic energy production and job creation, hydropower can play a critical role in providing clean renewable energy while expanding job opportunities in some of our hardest hit rural communities.

Hydropower is the cheapest and cleanest source of electricity available through modern technology. It's the highest source of non-carbon-emitting energy in the world and accounts for approximately 75 percent of the United States' total renewable electricity generation, making it the leading renewable energy resource of power. Canal-based hydropower can produce up to 1,400 megawatts of power in Colorado alone. Let's put this in perspective. This is the equivalent of the power produced by the originally designed output of the Glen Canyon Dam, just out of Colorado, not including the rest of the western United States.

Increased conduit hydropower serves a number of purposes: it produces renewable and emissions-free energy that can be used to pump water or sell electricity to the grid; it can offset diesel-generated pumps; it can generate revenue for the hydropower developer to help pay for aging infrastructure costs and water/power facility modernization; and it can create local jobs and generate revenue for the Federal Government.

As it stands, Federal regulations hinder this development on Federal projects and subject job creators to unnecessary requirements which can render small hydropower projects economically unfeasible. For this reason, I introduced H.R. 678, the Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act. This legislation authorizes power development at the agency's conduits to clear up multi-agency confusion and duplicative processes and reduces the regulatory costs associated with hydropower development.

H.R. 678, as passed by the Natural Resources Committee with bipartisan support, would eliminate the requirement of duplicative and unnecessary environmental analyses for projects on manmade facilities which already underwent a full environmental review at the time of their construction or when undergoing rehabilitation. The bill covers small hydropower generators installed on manmade pipes, ditches, and canals; and the renewable energy development promoted by the bill in no way impacts the natural environment. By streamlining this process, we can finally make these small conduit hydropower projects financially feasible and unleash private investment in clean energy that will reduce costs for ratepayers and increase tax revenue for the Treasury while putting people back to work.

I understand that some of my friends on the other side have reservations about this provision; and as I have made clear in the past, I'm open to working with my colleagues to be able to address their concerns with the NEPA provision. However, failure to address the existing regulatory uncertainty would negate one of the primary purposes of the bill and would ensure that the renewable energy development envisioned by the bill remains in limbo. I'm optimistic that discussing this issue openly will allay any concerns Members may have and allow us

to be able to arrive at a solution which ensures the implementation of a statutory framework that streamlines the project approval process and reduces costs.

I'm proud to have the support of the Family Farm Alliance, the National Water Resources Association, and the American Public Power Association, among others. I think the broad support this bill has seen among those most directly impacted indicates how close we are to making this renewable energy development a reality. I look forward to an open discussion on the merits of the bill, which I believe will speak for themselves.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time until my colleague is ready to close.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Let me take a moment just to give my impression of this particular bill, and then I'll be ready to close at that time.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bipartisan bill which had a bipartisan vote in this body last time and a bipartisan vote in the committee, sent to the Senate, where an errant Senator was able to hold the process up. Fortunately, in this session, there is a new chairman of that committee in the Senate from the West who clearly understands the value and significance of hydroelectric power.

So I think that everyone in this body on both sides of the aisle can agree that our Nation is in great need of more energy. If we want to create real jobs, private sector jobs, there has to be a strong energy component to our ability to do that. Our Nation has tremendous amounts of energy that are locked away domestically in the forms of oil and gas and low sulphur and high-BTU coal reserves; but too often special interest groups and layers of bureaucracy have kept us from becoming more energy self-sufficient with these areas. And we're now seeing and feeling the results every time somebody tries to pay an electric bill.

This administration seems to be dragging its feet on energy development of everything from the Keystone Pipeline to the development of public lands. But there is also another source of energy that is presently being unused and can be put to good use without negatively impacting the environment. The energy resource is what we're addressing here in this particular bill. This bill deals with electricity that can be generated from hydro, a renewable energy resource that is very clean and helpful to the environment.

Numerous witnesses testified this year and last year that there is an uncertainty on the NEPA costs, which throw these projects into limbo and often render projects financially unfeasible and stifle private investment far beyond what has been able to be done. Thus, this is stifling what could be done to produce self-sufficiency in energy production. One witness from Arizona simply testified in 2011 that it would cost them $20,000 to install this generator that would create energy in a Federal canal. Yet the NEPA analysis would cost them $50,000 to check the boxes and do that simple paperwork, as we have heard about. The environmental paperwork in this case is almost three times the cost of the capital that you would put into the project. And it all is redundant since the NEPA analysis was done in the first place for the entire canal. This is a second project put in the same canal that has already gone through this process. It's a manmade canal.

Witnesses have testified this year that despite the Bureau of Reclamation's claim of its categorical exclusions and having a policy in place, not one project has utilized this project because of a potential legal uncertainty surrounding categorical exclusions.

□ 1300

As a result, there is no new development that has occurred, and the gentleman from Colorado's amendment will improve this particular situation. So, once again, let this be done.

This is not denying a NEPA review. NEPA has already been done on every one of these projects. This is saying you don't need to do the same thing a second time, which is simply redundant, it is silly, it's red tape, bungling by administrations that need not be there.

The choice is very simple in this particular bill: Either you can give the administration, the executive branch, the right to make these kinds of decisions on moving us forward, in which case the administration can make and can take away their decision at whim, in which case it invites litigation because of the uncertainty of an administrative policy, and also invites conflict within different administrative agencies. Or we can do what we're supposed to do and actually pass legislation to solve problems. The gentleman from Colorado's approach is simply allowing the legislature to make the decision, to institute what the policy will be and tell the agencies how they will proceed into the future. We can either have the legislature stand up and do our job and do it the right way or we can pass it all off and let the executive branch come up with regulations now which they could change and also are subject to the fear of litigation.

This is an easy thing to do. This bill actually should be a no-brainer. It will increase the energy production we have in the country, it will increase the ability of making sure that we have adequate water resources in the West, it will also give a needed boost of revenues to the canal companies, and it will create ultimately more jobs, especially with a cheap form of highly effective energy production.

This bill is reasonable, and it's understandable why it passed with a bipartisan vote last time. I hope it passes with a bipartisan vote again, and I hope we can recognize that this will move us forward.

Mr. Speaker, I will reserve the balance of my time unless the gentlelady has other speeches that she has requests for.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no requests for time, so I am prepared to close if my colleague is.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I am prepared to close when you are.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, today's bill does nothing to address the pressing economic issues facing every American household and fails to stop the sequestration cuts that are threatening our economy as a whole. It's rather ambiguous. On one hand it gives; on the other hand it takes back away, but we'll get into that in the general debate.

Instead, today's legislation unnecessarily attacks environmental protections while doing nothing to create new jobs. Today's legislation includes a blanket waiver for all small conduit hydropower projects that generate less than 5 megawatts of power. The requirement is arbitrary and would fail to protect the environment. Environmental danger is not determined by the megawatts produced but whether the hydropower project is located where it is likely to do damage. A 1-megawatt project in the wrong location would be more harmful to the environment than a 6-megawatt project in the right location.

Perhaps most importantly, consideration of this legislation is taking up time that we could otherwise be using to repeal the sequester and create jobs. As I have mentioned repeatedly on the House floor, my colleague and ranking member of the Budget Committee, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, has appeared at the Rules Committee repeatedly offering legislation to repeal the sequester and reduce our deficit in a responsible way. The Rules Committee on at least three times has never even allowed it to come to the floor. Despite voting on hydropower legislation twice in the last 13 months, the majority has rejected Mr. VAN HOLLEN, who, as I said, is the ranking member on the Budget Committee, and his bill would save and create thousands of jobs.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 1426 from Representative TIM BISHOP of New York to roll back tax giveaways to big oil companies. The bill is known as the Big Oil Welfare Repeal Act. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD along with extraneous matter immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question so that we can get back to trying to grow our economy and create American jobs,

and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me state a couple of things. Number one, this is a good rule. Therefore, you should vote for this rule. It is a fair and open rule—a fair and modified open rule. More importantly, it is a rule that will allow us to discuss a very good bill. This bill encourages energy production. We may think of these as small energy projects, but I am told that all these small projects already being held up in Colorado would create the amount of energy that comes from a large project like the Glen Canyon Dam. It's a large amount of energy that is clean energy that we will be producing. Number two, this bill gets rid of redundancy. It is not that we are doing away with environmental protection or a review for environmental protection. That environmental protection review has already been done. It is that we're simply saying for these small projects you don't need to do the same thing a second time and incur the cost, which is an amazing amount of cost, and potential litigation factors that go along with it.

If we do want to produce private sector jobs, and that is a worthy goal, you have to have energy to do it. This bill produces the energy which will be used to grow the economy to produce those jobs that we really want. That is why it is a bipartisan bill, and I expect a bipartisan vote on this particular bill. It's a good bill, and we should pass it today. This is a fair rule, and I urge its adoption.

The material previously referred to by Ms. SLAUGHTER is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 140 OFFERED BY MS. SLAUGHTER OF NEW YORK

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1426) to disallow the deduction for income attributable to domestic production activities with respect to oil and gas activities of major integrated oil companies. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1426.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. With that, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 236, nays 190, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 93]

YEAS—236

Aderholt
Alexander
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Radel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers

Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—190

Andrews
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—5

Castor (FL)
Hastings (FL)
Lynch
Markey
Ros-Lehtinen

□ 1334

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ELECTING MEMBERS TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY AND THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of House Resolution 142, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 142

Resolved,

SECTION 1. ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY AND JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING.

(a) JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS ON THE LIBRARY.—The following Members are hereby elected to the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library, to serve with the chair of the Committee on House Administration and the chair of the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch of the Committee on Appropriations:

(1) Mr. Harper.
(2) Mr. Brady of Pennsylvania.
(3) Ms. Zoe Lofgren of California.

(b) JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING.—The following Members are hereby elected to the Joint Committee on Printing, to serve with the chair of the Committee on House Administration:

(1) Mr. Harper.
(2) Mr. Nugent.
(3) Mr. Brady of Pennsylvania.
(4) Mr. Vargas.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on House Resolution 142.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF MR. SMITH OF NEBRASKA AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1175

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw Mr. ADRIAN SMITH of Nebraska as a cosponsor of H.R. 1175.

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

There was no objection.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION SMALL CONDUIT HYDROPOWER DEVELOPMENT AND RURAL JOBS ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 678.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR). Pursuant to House Resolution 140 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 678.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1338

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 678) to authorize all Bureau of Reclamation conduit facilities for hydropower development under Federal Reclamation law, and for other purposes, with Mr. POE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 678, the Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act.

Those of us from the Pacific Northwest know and understand the importance of hydropower and the significant role it plays in our economy. In my home State of Washington, hydropower produces 70 percent of our power, and it helps keep electricity rates low and affordable for our residents.

□ 1340

It is one of the cheapest and cleanest forms of electricity, and helps make other intermittent sources of renewable energy, like wind and solar, possible.

Yet too often, as is frequently the case with energy projects on Federal lands, the development of new hydropower gets caught up in bureaucratic red tape and regulations.

Today's bill, sponsored by our colleague from Colorado, Mr. TIPTON, would cut through that red tape to expand the development of small conduit hydropower. Specifically, it clears up Federal agency confusion by directly authorizing hydropower development at almost 47,000 miles of Bureau of Reclamation canals. It also streamlines the regulatory process for developing small canal and pipeline hydropower projects on existing Bureau of Reclamation facilities.

Mr. Chairman, I want to stress the point that these new projects will only be at existing facilities. These existing man-made facilities have already gone through extensive environmental review when they were initially built. Requiring duplicative reviews on existing facilities only imposes unnecessary delays and, thus, administrative costs.

I realize that the Bureau of Reclamation has come up with its own version of streamlining since we considered this bill in the last Congress, but it's only a theoretical version of streamlining since it has never been used in the 6 months after it was created. This bill simply streamlines the regulatory and administrative process so that water users can be free to develop hydropower at the Federal canals they already operate and maintain.

This bill will help generate thousands of megawatts of clean, cheap, abundant hydropower and, thus, will bring in new revenue to the Federal Government and, more importantly, Mr. Chairman, create new American jobs. Best of all, we can do this at no cost to the American taxpayer. This is exactly the type of commonsense proposal that Republicans support as part of the all-of-the-above energy plan. Hydropower must be part of the solution. Families and small businesses rely on access to affordable electricity, and this bill is a simple way to lower prices by expanding production on one of the best forms of clean, renewable energy.

Mr. Chairman, nearly identical legislation passed the House last Congress with bipartisan support. I hope the House will once again do so today, and that the Senate will take action on this job-creating energy bill.

I want to thank particularly members of the Natural Resources Committee Mr. TIPTON of Colorado, Mr. GOSAR of Arizona, and Mr. COSTA of California for their tremendous work on this bill and for being strong champions of small-scale hydropower production.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the general premise of this bill but oppose the legislation as is due to the inclusion of the NEPA waiver.

Today we are debating H.R. 678, a bill that should be noncontroversial. In fact, it should have already been enacted into law. We all agree that adding small conduit hydropower projects is a great idea—no, it's really a wonderful idea—and H.R. 678 could have easily been passed through the House with overwhelming bipartisan support. But, unfortunately, my esteemed colleagues on the other side have chosen to turn this noncontroversial bill into a partisan fight over ideology by waiving compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA, for Federal conduit projects.

As my colleague from Washington indicated, it means jobs. It means the addition of clean energy. It means all of those things, but to the exclusion of NEPA. As the gentleman mentioned, H.R. 678 would amend the Reclamation Project Act of 1939 and, thus, would facilitate and expand the private development of small conduit hydropower at the Bureau of Reclamation facilities. The legislation seeks to accomplish several goals, the most important of which is authorizing reclamation to develop and increase power at most of those facilities.

H.R. 678 also includes a provision that waives NEPA for all conduit projects generating less than 5 megawatts. The bill waives NEPA, which is on page 4, lines 14 to 18, even though the Bureau of Reclamation has implemented a categorical exclusion on their own accord to apply to small conduit projects. You may call it theoretical, but it has only been there 6 months, and it takes government a long time to get the word out to those parties. The waiver of NEPA in this bill is unnecessary, since Reclamation has already implemented this guidance through this categorical exclusion. The legislation seeks to solve a NEPA problem that does not exist. Unfortunately, some Members on the other side of the aisle have characterized the waiver of NEPA as ''the main purpose of this legislation.''

The waiver in this bill is the exact same waiver that Republicans put into the nearly identical bill last Congress. Just like the last time, the Senate will not pass it, and the bill will again expire in the Senate. This is totally unnecessary. This is not what anyone on this side of the aisle wants to see happen, and we would support the bill without the NEPA waiver.

Mr. Chairman, I oppose this legislation and ask my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK), the chairman of the subcommittee dealing with this legislation on the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, the so-called streamlining that the Bureau has pledged to do and has done has produced no new projects for reasons that were made very clear to our Subcommittee on Water and Power by numerous witnesses. NEPA is at the heart of the problem. As the chairman said, the Bureau of Reclamation operates 47,000 miles of pipelines and canals that have already undergone extensive environmental review. By installing small generators in the existing pipelines, we could add the equivalent generating capacity of major hydroelectric dams, meaning millions of dollars of new revenue to the government, millions of watts of new, clean, cheap electricity, and all the jobs these projects would produce.

The gentlelady has said that she supports the objective and is willing to do everything that she can to help except by getting government out of the way. The Federal bureaucracy has made it cost prohibitive for people to install these small generators in these existing canals and pipelines. Rather, they force them to conduct crushingly expensive environmental reviews, navigate time-consuming bureaucratic mazes, pay exorbitant administrative fees, and risk the uncertainties of endless internal review and external litigation. These bureaucratic obstacles often cost more than the projects themselves and turn sensible, economic electricity projects into cost-prohibitive farces.

As proposed to be amended, this bill requires the Bureau to categorically exclude the installation of these small, hydroelectric generators in existing facilities that have already undergone environmental review. It designates the central office within the Bureau to provide uniform guidance on processing applications. It establishes a sensible and streamlined process to determine development rights. And it ensures that installation of hydrogenerators will not disrupt existing water operations.

Mr. Chairman, think about the implications just to farming as one example. Some irrigation districts are forced to use diesel generators to pump water to their fields. You put hydroelectric generators in existing canals and pipes, and they become virtually self-sustaining, while reducing reliance on other sources of electricity that do produce air emissions.

It is truly mystifying that a Nation plagued by prolonged economic stagnation, chronic unemployment, and increasingly scarce and expensive electricity would adopt a willful and deliberate policy obstructing the construction of these inexpensive and innocuous generators in already-existing facilities. Even FERC, a bastion of regulatory excess, agrees that these studies are unnecessary when conducted on similar non-Federal facilities.

I believe this bill is a model for the future. I hope that similar regulatory reforms will soon be extended to other Federal and non-Federal facilities.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the ranking member, Congresswoman NAPOLITANO, for her efforts on this legislation, Chairman DOC HASTINGS, as well as the chair of the subcommittee, TOM MCCLINTOCK, and the author of this measure, Congressman TIPTON, for trying to bring folks together.

□ 1350

Mr. Chairman, people from every walk of life are looking to Congress today to see if we can come together to deal with any of our problems, whether they be big, small, or in between. I rise today to support legislation, I think, that does that. This isn't the biggest

legislation we'll deal with this year, nor is it the smallest; but it's something that will help America's energy policy.

Our bipartisan bill would amend the Reclamation Act, as has been stated, of 1939, to create a permanent process for how local irrigation districts and water agencies develop this very valuable, renewable, carbon-free energy at our reclamation facilities. And as we're putting together an energy policy that uses all-of-the-above, this becomes an important part.

H.R. 678, the Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act, is a bipartisan bill that puts existing resources and knowledge we already have to expand one of the most important tools in our Nation's energy toolbox. Let me repeat that: one of the most important tools in our Nation's energy toolbox.

Hydropower is the single largest source of clean, sustainable energy and has been powering our country for over 100 years throughout the land. When most people think about hydropower, of course, they think about the big projects, Hoover Dam and other modern engineering marvels.

However, the beauty of this hydropower legislation is it can also be used on much smaller scaled, reliable projects in which we already have the infrastructure in place. Every day, water flows thousands of miles through canals, pipes and ditches across this country. I know—I happen to represent one of those places, the great San Joaquin Valley, in which we have a vast network of dams and reservoirs and canals that provide that water for those who most need it, our cities and our farms.

We have an old saying: where water flows, food grows. Every day we miss valuable opportunities to utilize this resource's full potential. This bill changes that.

This water could easily be harnessed to provide low-cost, renewable energy to American families and help add to the increment of energy that we need in this country.

Currently, small conduit hydropower is largely untapped and underutilized; and it's also, obviously, a clean-energy opportunity. The greatest barrier to unleashing the next generation of hydropower is not technological, because we have made great progress on the technological side. Unfortunately, it's regulatory.

Currently, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, otherwise known as FERC, maintains jurisdiction over small projects like those that I am talking about.

Serving on the Natural Resources Committee, I've heard from folks across the country say that these regulations are too costly and too difficult to navigate. Obtaining an exception from FERC's permitting rules can take up to 6 months and cost nearly $50,000 for a local water district to pursue. That's unnecessary, and it's also a waste of valuable resources.

Our bipartisan bill, again, would amend the Reclamation Act of 1939 to create a permanent process for how local irrigation districts and water agencies develop this very valuable, renewable, carbon-free resource for reclamation facilities.

By streamlining the process, the irrigation districts would be empowered to develop small conduit hydropower at no cost to the taxpayers. These projects typically are 5 megawatts and less.

Harnessing the power of water already flowing through reclamation facilities would stimulate rural economies, reduce pumping costs for farmers who face those pumping costs every year.

I am proud to stand with my colleagues who are supporting this legislation. I want to thank Congressman TIPTON for this effort, because it helps us take advantage of existing facilities that are already in place to provide additional resource of power where we need it.

If we want to strengthen our energy portfolio, let's start with the low-hanging fruit. This is low-hanging fruit.

Let me just give you some numbers. In California there are 20 small hydro projects, should this legislation become law, that would be available to this process. Let me underline that: 20 projects in California that would qualify.

In the Nation, the Bureau of Reclamation has determined that there are 373 projects throughout the country that potentially would qualify should this legislation become law.

The bill does just that. I urge your support for H.R. 678.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), the sponsor of this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. TIPTON. I thank Chairman HASTINGS for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 678 is a commonsense piece of legislation to foster clean, renewable energy development, create rural jobs in America, and to do so without taxpayer cost, while returning revenues to the U.S. Treasury and, by all measures, should be considered low-hanging fruit, as our fellow Member has just noted, for congressional action.

There's been a lot of discussion on both sides of the aisle about the need to be able to pursue an all-of-the-above strategy. Hydropower, as the cleanest and most abundant natural energy source, should be at the forefront of any comprehensive natural energy policy.

Increased conduit hydropower serves a number of purposes. It produces renewable and emissions-free energy that can be used to pump water or sell electricity into the grid; it can generate revenue for the irrigation district to be able to help pay for aging infrastructure costs and facilitate modernization; and it can create local jobs and generate revenue to the Federal Government.

It's as simple as this poster demonstrates, as easy as putting a portable generator into moving canal water.

Many irrigation districts and electrical utilities seek to develop hydropower on Bureau of Reclamation pipes, ditches and canals; but regulatory uncertainty and the threat of unnecessary bureaucratic requirements stand in the way.

This legislation seeks to remove duplicative environmental analysis where doing so will considerably reduce costs for hydropower developers, while retaining the analysis necessary to protect valuable natural resources.

While the Bureau of Reclamation has recently begun to inventory facilities suitable for small conduit hydropower generation and develop directives and standards to help promote that end, for far too long, duplicative review for small hydropower projects on existing, manmade facilities rendered these projects financially unfeasible, and significant uncertainty still remains.

The generating units covered by H.R. 678 would be installed on entirely manmade waterways which have already received a full environmental review when they were built or rehabilitated. Any transmission associated with these projects that would result from the passage of this bill must still undergo full environmental review where they impact the environment. To require a lengthy review for dropping a small generator into a pipe simply defies logic, and we cannot pursue an all-of-the-above energy strategy if we continue business as usual.

In addition to creating regulatory certainty and removing duplicative processes, this legislation authorizes power development at the agency's conduits to clear up multi-Federal agency confusion and further reduces the regulatory costs associated with hydropower development. This provision of the bill will provide the necessary statutory authority to be able to reduce litigation that the agency is sure to seek under the current framework which relies on broad authorities that do not specifically authorize hydropower development.

This legislation ensures the continued use of the Bureau facilities, primarily for water supply and irrigation, and protects the interests of those maintaining and operating these facilities by offering them the first right of refusal to take advantage of small conduit energy development projects.

Non-Federal operators know the details of the facilities best and are locally invested. As a result, it's only logical to offer them the first opportunity to develop this energy on facilities that they maintain.

Additionally, those irrigation districts with preexisting arrangements with the Bureau or the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for water delivery and hydropower development will not be disturbed by this bill.

I'm proud to have the support of the Family Farm Alliance, the National Water Resources Association, the American Public Power Association, and the National Hydropower Association, among others.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to be able to make this public law and to start putting rural America back to work and developing clean, renewable energy.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I agree with my colleague, except some of those projects were built in 1902 and through the 1970s. I think we do need NEPA protection.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL).

□ 1400

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I would like to thank the ranking member for yielding me time.

Madam Chair, I rise to object today to the consideration of this bill and rather propose that we stand in this House and we consider Mr. HOYER's Make It In America package. We can come together and focus on real solutions that will get our economy moving again, and we should take up Mr. HOYER's Make It In America package because it will strengthen our economy and create non-outsourceable jobs at home, here in America. The Make It In America package includes bills like mine, H.R. 1022, the Securing Energy Critical Elements and American Jobs Act of 2013 that will help secure America's place as a leader in science and technology with a 21st century workforce.

What are rare Earth elements? Well, these are 17 chemical elements—elements that, prior to coming to Congress and learning about how they affect our economy, I couldn't point out at pistol point—that are very critical to making cell phones, to making our electric cars, and also to making our antimissile systems. Despite the name, they are very abundant in our country and they can be extracted in an environmentally safe manner.

So what's the problem? Well, today, 97 percent of rare Earth elements are extracted and exported from China. Eighty percent of rare Earth magnets and almost 100 percent of related metal production are coming from China. In 2010, China temporarily cut off rare Earth supplies to Japan, the European Union, and the United States, highlighting the potential consequences to the United States for relying so heavily upon China for rare Earth production that is so crucial and critical to what we can create here in America.

My district includes northern Silicon Valley, home of silicon chip processing, home of the technology boom, home of the Internet, and also home of many advanced manufacturing production sites. H.R. 1022, the Securing Energy Critical Elements in American Jobs Act of 2013 aims to help reduce our dependence on China for these critical elements and instead make it here in America. But in order for us to do this, we need to invest in developing our technical workforce here at home.

Currently, the United States lacks the necessary technical expertise to ensure a reliable supply of energy critical elements. My bill, H.R. 1022, enlists the talents of our university students and encourages them to develop the technical expertise necessary to secure America's access to these elements. We need to ensure that the best and brightest minds in our area and our country have the tools and support they need to support America's access to energy critical elements. H.R. 1022 will promote collaboration and research opportunities in the fields of energy-critical elements for students at higher institutions, and coordination of Federal agencies to promote a stable supply of energy-critical elements.

We also have in my congressional district what's called the ''Tri-Valley,'' or, as I like to call it, the ''I Valley,'' or the ''Innovation Valley.'' This area also would rely upon energy-critical elements. And as the ranking member said, we have an opportunity today to work in a bipartisan fashion. Unfortunately, I do not see us doing that. So I would conclude by asking that we come together.

Also, in my bill there's a loan guarantee for companies with new processing and refining technologies. The Securing Energy Critical Elements and American Jobs Act of 2013 will help to spur private investment in companies on the forefront of this critical field. It's very important that we have the Federal Government at the very inception, in the beginning, providing the research and Federal funding. But most important is to get it out into private industry. And that's what this bill calls upon.

So, again, I urge my colleagues to stop wasting time with partisan bills like this today. Instead, let's come together to train and secure a 21st century workforce. Let's harness our own resources. Let's Make It In America, and we can help all Americans make it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, before I yield time to the gentlelady from Wyoming, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I find the gentleman's argument on the other side rather striking because he's talking about American-made jobs and another piece of legislation not associated with this. And I would just point out, what could be more American-made jobs than putting hydropower facilities on American soil? That creates jobs. That's what this bill is all about.

And the second point, the gentleman mentioned the rare Earth issue that we have. Last Congress, we passed legislation here so we could utilize the known rare Earth supplies we have in this country, and it was the other body, controlled by the gentleman's own party, that didn't act on it. And he sounds like it is a big, big issue now. I suspect we may have, Madam Chairman, that legislation again in front of us, and I would hope that we could elicit the gentleman's support when that bill comes to the floor.

With that, Madam Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS), a valuable member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I rise in support of H.R. 678, of which I'm an original cosponsor, and I want to thank Representative TIPTON, Chairman MCCLINTOCK, and Chairman HASTINGS for their hard work on this bill, which unlocks significant hydropower development potential in my home State of Wyoming.

Congress and the Bureau of Reclamation have over the years created hundreds of canals and pipelines to serve water uses in the West. Most of these conduits were never envisioned as power sources because the technology wasn't there or it wasn't yet cost-effective. But technology has changed, and now it's feasible to harness and channel the energy byproduct of these water flows. The Bureau of Reclamation has identified 373 conduits in the West with hydropower potential. Wyoming leads the States with 121 of these sites and is second only to Colorado in terms of the potential energy output. In Wyoming alone, the estimated potential is 82 million kilowatt hours annually from a clean, renewable energy source. Unleashing this potential, while still protecting the environment and end water users, is what this bill is all about.

First, H.R. 678 eliminates bureaucratic confusion by expressly authorizing the Bureau to oversee hydropower development in its conduits.

Second, it directs the Bureau of Reclamation to exempt small hydropower projects from duplicative environmental paperwork requirements. We're talking about placing small power generators in canals and ditches where the ground has already been disturbed. Fences have gone up. Environmental analysis has been conducted, sometimes multiple times because of the Bureau's contract renewals with some water users. Requiring duplicative environmental analysis on preexisting conduits makes no sense, provides no environmental benefit, and imposes more costs and bureaucratic uncertainty on potential developers.

Third, the bill protects water supply and delivery as the primary and fundamental priority for these conduits, whose vital mission will not be disrupted.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense, jobs-creating bill.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. May I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The gentlewoman from California has 18 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Washington has 16½ minutes remaining.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CÁRDENAS).

Mr. CARDENAS. I thank the gentlewoman for giving me the opportunity to speak on this matter.

H.R. 678 could easily be a bipartisan, noncontroversial bill. But Republicans insist on including an unnecessary provision to waive environmental review. It sets the wrong precedent. Nearly 100 days have passed since the 113th Congress has been sworn in, and not one bill has been brought to the floor that would have a measurable effect of reinvigorating our manufacturing sector. In fact, quite the opposite has happened.

Democrats have announced the Make It In America initiative to focus on four areas to help our economy grow. In order to strengthen the economy, this Congress must: adopt and pursue a comprehensive manufacturing strategy; promote the export of U.S. goods; encourage innovation; and train a 21st century workforce. In addition to these four core components, we must work together to address the equally important task of getting our small business owners access to capital they so desperately need. Without capital, our businesses are stagnant, cannot invest in their own growth, and will not hire that unemployed person who has been searching for a job for months.

We must do more to get the financial institutions back to lending in this country. Now it's up to Republicans and Democrats to work together to enact and pass Make It In America legislation and help secure America as the world leader when it comes to job creation and when it comes to innovation. When it comes to hydropower, it's very important for us to understand yes, we need more hydropower, yes, we need innovation, yes, we need to make sure the small and large hydropower actually moves forward. But doing it at the expense of the environment by waiving environmental review is just not the right way to do it.

□ 1410

Many people in these Chambers speak constantly of making sure that we don't put things on the backs of our children and our grandchildren. Every time we waive environmental review, every time that we don't do things carefully, we move in a direction where it takes sometimes a year or 2 or 3 to go in the wrong direction, it takes decades for us to correct those environmental problems.

So environmental review should be part of the process and, yes, it should be streamlined and, yes, we need to make sure that we do things in a fashion that does put people back to work, but we have to do it carefully and responsibly.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR), another valuable member of the Committee on Natural Resources.

Mr. GOSAR. Thank you, Chairman HASTINGS.

Madam Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 678, the Bureau of Reclamation and Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act of 2013. This legislation was one of Representative TIPTON's and my top priorities in the Natural Resources Committee last Congress, so I am pleased to join him again as an original cosponsor and appreciate that the House is taking up the legislation so quickly in the 113th Congress.

Our country is failing to fully tap its hydroelectric power generation potential. The Federal Government owns over 47,000 miles of canals, laterals, drains, pipeline and tunnels throughout the West that are perfectly suitable for hydropower production, but hardworking irrigators and power providers in our districts, already operating and maintaining this infrastructure on behalf of the Federal Government, cannot install hydropower generators because government regulations and bureaucratic confusion are making it cost prohibitive.

H.R. 678 will clear away these bureaucratic obstacles that stand between our Nation and thousands of megawatts of clean, cheap, abundant, and reliable hydroelectricity. The resulting development will create jobs in rural communities hit hardest by the recession, increase our country's renewable energy portfolio, and even generate revenue for the Federal Treasury.

The Members of this body opposing this legislation claim it could cause harm to the environment. To be clear, this bill only allows for development on existing irrigation canals and ditch systems, not free-flowing rivers and streams. These conduits have been in place for years, do not contain any endangered wildlife or fish, and were subject to environmental analysis at the time of construction or rehabilitation.

On the poster to my left is a clear example of what we are talking about. Folks, it's concrete. It's been sitting here with running water. I don't see the need and I hope you don't see the need for a NEPA environmental assessment. This canal is in the western part of my congressional district. We have miles of this type of infrastructure throughout the State, including the Central Arizona Project. It provides my constituents with the water necessary to live in the desert and even grow a good portion of this Nation's produce.

The experts on the ground say we are sitting on a hydropower gold mine waiting for the needed clarifications and streamlining that will cut costs and make this program more attractive. There are over 26 locations just like this one in my State alone—mostly in Yuma, Pinal, and western Maricopa Counties—that are suitable for this development. The Agri-Business Council of Arizona believes its members could produce enough low-cost clean energy to power nearly 5,000 homes simply by installing these small hydropower generators. That is a huge economic impact for the small rural communities these irrigators serve. They would provide a real economic boost and lower energy costs.

There are many solutions to our Nation's energy crisis, but hydropower is clearly part of our all-of-the-above plan. It already accounts for about 75 percent of this country's total renewable electricity generation, and we haven't even begun yet.

Early this Congress, the House unanimously passed the Hydropower Regulatory Efficiency Act, which promotes development on privately owned infrastructure. We should do the same today on Congressman TIPTON's and my legislation that does the same for publicly owned infrastructure.

Congress would be doing the American people an injustice if we didn't move swiftly on this bill. Hydropower must be an integral component of the long-term all-of-the-above energy strategy in Arizona and for our Nation, and this bill will allow rural western communities to play a major role in that future. I will continue to work with Congressman TIPTON to ensure that this bill not only passes the House this year but gets through the Senate and is sent to the President's desk for his signature. Folks, it is that simple: commonsense utilization of infrastructure we already have.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chairman, I am glad that there are some visual effects here. It is important. But I don't know how all the canal and for the release, were there any levee issues. So it is important to have a NEPA review.

I would now like to yield 5 minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from California, Congressman TAKANO.

Mr. TAKANO. I thank the gentlelady from my own home State of California for yielding time.

Madam Chair, this bill is something that Democrats could support if proper environmental review were not made a problem. I really believe this Congress needs to get back to getting serious about discussing how we're going to put our country back to work.

The national unemployment rate is 7.6 percent, and in my own district it's nearly 11 percent. The Congress should be focused on putting Americans back to work. Democrats have a plan. It's called Make It In America. This plan, put together by Mr. HOYER from Maryland, addresses the most pressing crisis that our Nation faces, the jobs crisis, and it will put Americans back to work. It has four main points:

Number one, adopt and pursue a national manufacturing strategy;

Number two, promote the export of American goods;

Number three, encourage manufacturers to bring jobs and innovation back to America;

Number four, train and secure a 21st century workforce.

We have the tools at our disposal to do these things.

The legislation that I have introduced that is a part of the Make It In America plan is called the Jobs Skills for America's Students Act. It encourages partnerships between employers and educational institutions. Employers who participate are able to receive a $2,000 tax credit per student participating in a qualified technical training and skills program, with a total credit amount cap of $10,000 per year.

Many of America's fastest growing industries, industries that will benefit from the Make It In America plan, like advanced manufacturing and clean energy, require a highly skilled workforce. These industries struggle to find workers who possess the technical training that they require. The National Association of Manufacturers estimates that 600,000 manufacturing jobs remain unfilled due to a lack of qualified candidates. Just today, we learned from the Department of Labor that there are 3.9 million job openings in America, the most in almost 5 years. Many of these jobs are unfilled because of the lack of training.

The Job Skills for America's Students Act partners key industries with community colleges and other programs to offer students the opportunity to obtain the training they need to thrive in the field of their choice. To grow our middle class and create a workforce for the future, we must close the skills gap and we must make training affordable and effective.

I urge my Republican colleagues to work with Democrats to pass each piece of the Make It In America legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to another member of the Natural Resources Committee, the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES).

Mr. DAINES. Chairman HASTINGS, thanks to you and to Mr. TIPTON for the opportunity to speak in support of H.R. 678 today. This bill reflects an issue that is of true importance to my home State of Montana.

You know, when most people think of our rivers and waterways in Montana, they think of celebrities like Brad Pitt standing in the Little Blackfoot River casting for trout in the movie ''A River Runs Through It.''

Back in Montana, we rely on our rivers and our natural resources as an important part of our way of life. However, I'm here today to focus on a very significant benefit of our waterways, and that's hydropower. Our waterways help power our homes, they irrigate our farms and ranches, and they water our livestock. In Montana, about a third of our energy comes from hydropower, generating 1,100 megawatts per year. To put this in perspective, 1 megawatt will power nearly 600 homes. Six of Montana's 10 largest generating plants run on hydroelectric power. But we're not here to talk about streams and rivers; we're here to talk about man-made canals and manmade waterways.

The Bureau of Reclamation has constructed 32 such projects in Montana, and with the improved ability to harness the energy of moving water in conduits, the Rural Jobs Act would allow each of these projects to generate more than 26 million kilowatts per hour of power. There is no reason red tape should tie up that much alternative energy potential.

This bill will help lower energy costs, create Montana jobs, and provide our Nation with a sustainable, renewable source of energy. This is common sense. I believe that H.R. 678, the Rural Jobs Act, is important for our country, and I strongly support its passage.

□ 1420

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), another member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. LAMALFA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Chairman, once in awhile a bill comes through that even makes great sense in Washington, D.C., and this is a really commonsense measure. I live on a farm in northern California where I'm surrounded by canals and ditches and water moving all about in my daily life in producing rice, and so there's all these opportunities we would have on installations like that. But we're talking today about Bureau installations to put renewable power in place that, according to this chart here, would affect many, many States with many installations and provide many American jobs.

The opportunities of this bill, just putting the bureaucracy and the red tape aside, for a commonsense measure to take advantage of an opportunity to do something that, on the heels of March Madness here, really, installations would be no harm, no foul. These facilities already exist. It would be easy to put in place. If we could put aside the red tape of NEPA requirements, it would be unnecessary.

As I drive up and down my canals and my ditches, again, no harm, no foul here. We're looking at an easy installation that would be a very valuable thing for, where I come from in California, a renewable energy portfolio, which is 33 percent kicking in. It's pretty hard to find renewable energy, especially when most of those sources are required to be solar or wind.

Hydropower is a very important component in my part of the State here. We have so much water that we can take advantage of to produce, why aren't we doing it in the commonsense areas?

H.R. 678—and I commend the chairman and Mr. TIPTON for bringing this bill forward. This is, again, something that's going to be very positive for rural America, for our renewable energy portfolio, which is affecting, I think, a lot of the country these days, because renewable energy in most cases is very expensive. So the same people that are saying we can't do this without NEPA, the same people that are saying we can't have fracturing, which is bringing very cost-effective electricity to many, many Americans now, the same people that want to remove hydroelectric dams in my part of the district in northern California are now wanting to oppose a commonsense measure like this.

Sometimes I just don't get it, but this one here is really an opportunity to move forward with opportunity for our rural States, for rural areas to produce these projects with American know-how and more American jobs. We hear a lot about that here today. Let's put Americans to work with commonsense, reachable measures that are environmentally sound and certainly good for our economy.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, may I inquire how many minutes we have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 12 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Washington has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. May I inquire of my colleague how many other speakers he has?

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I am prepared to close general debate if the gentlelady is prepared to close.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I am. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Chair, as I've said before, this is a good bill with one bad provision in it, and that is the NEPA waiver that is not needed. It is not good environmental policy, and it is not good energy policy.

NEPA is not just red tape. It is a chance for the Federal Government to consider alternatives, to listen to not only the opponent, but get input from everybody impacted and to consider any possible impacts to the area.

At the appropriate time, I will offer an amendment to fit the one flaw in this bill. I hope my amendment is adopted and we'll send this to the Senate for passage.

Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

This debate has been rather interesting, because it sounds like on the floor there is widespread support for the concept of this bill. And why shouldn't there be? After all, there are 47,000 miles of canals and ditches that could be utilized for energy production.

There seems to be one problem, and that problem revolves around NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act, which was put in place, by the way, in 1969. I'm not going do say there's a direct correlation between NEPA and the lack of Bureau of Reclamation projects, but it is very interesting that most of the great projects that were built in the West were built prior to NEPA.

There were environmental statutes on the book, Madam Chairwoman, back then, and they are all satisfied. I happen to live in central Washington. There are two great projects in central Washington—the Columbia Basin Project and the Yakima River Project; in total, probably over a million acres of irrigated land.

Here is the truism, Madam Chairwoman. What we are talking about are our facilities where water is running through them, water is running downhill. We all know that water running downhill creates a certain amount of energy. All we want to do is capture that energy. With the prior chart that the gentleman from California put up, most of the States that will benefit by this are from the West. That means that we can make the desert bloom even more in the West if we utilize these facilities.

Finally, I just want to make one other observation. My good friend from California was saying that, okay, this is like a bill we had last year. We passed it; the Senate didn't do anything. Well, I would just remind the gentlelady, and she should know this, and I know she does, we are two distinct bodies, the House and the Senate. If they have a different view, for goodness sake, pass something. If it's different than our view, then we'll figure out how to come together. But to simply say, this is a good piece of legislation but we don't like NEPA, therefore, don't pass it because the Senate won't take it up, is not doing our job.

Madam Chairman, this is a good piece of legislation. There are some amendments that will be following. We can get into more detail on those. But I urge my colleagues to support passage of this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 678, the Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act, of which I am a cosponsor, and I want to thank Mr. TIPTON for his efforts.

Expanding access to clean, affordable, reliable energy is one challenge facing our Nation today. And while visionaries are looking for solutions, outdated bureaucracy is stifling innovation.

Though its environmental impacts are negligible, small hydropower development remains a financial challenge.

By exempting small hydropower from NEPA requirements, this bill substantially reduces administrative costs and could help stimulate the economy of rural America at no cost to taxpayers.

Let me be clear, Mr. Chair, this bill, like hydropower legislation I introduced last Congress, is limited in scope.

We're not talking about waiving environmental regulations for large, new infrastructure projects; we're talking about streamlining the process of developing clean, renewable energy on existing conduits.

According to a Bureau of Reclamation's March 2012 report on conduit hydropower development, more than 30 irrigation sites in my home State of Nebraska contain more than 5,000 kilowatts of potential hydropower development.

This bill empowers local irrigation districts to produce emissions–free energy which could be used by producers or sold to help pay for aging infrastructure costs.

There are no government mandates and no hidden costs, Mr. Chair.

Sustainable, affordable energy is critical to growing our economy and this is commonsense policymaking.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule and is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 678

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 ''Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act''.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION.

Section 9(c) of the Reclamation Project Act of 1939 (43 U.S.C. 485h(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Secretary is authorized to enter into contracts to furnish water'' and inserting the following:

''(1) The Secretary is authorized to enter into contracts to furnish water'';

(2) by striking ''(1) shall'' and inserting ''(A) shall'';

(3) by striking ''(2) shall'' and inserting ''(B) shall'';

(4) by striking ''respecting the terms of sales of electric power and leases of power privileges shall be in addition and alternative to any authority in existing laws relating to particular projects'' and inserting ''respecting the sales of electric power and leases of power privileges shall be an authorization in addition to and alternative to any authority in existing laws related to particular projects, including small conduit hydropower development''; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) When carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall first offer the lease of power privilege to an irrigation district or water users association operating the applicable transferred work, or to the irrigation district or water users association receiving water from the applicable reserved work. The Secretary shall determine a reasonable time frame for the irrigation district or water users association to accept or reject a lease of power privilege offer.

''(3) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) shall not apply to small conduit hydropower development, excluding siting of associated transmission on Federal lands, under this subsection.

''(4) The Power Resources Office of the Bureau of Reclamation shall be the lead office of small conduit hydropower activities conducted under this subsection.

''(5) Nothing in this subsection shall obligate the Western Area Power Administration, the Bonneville Power Administration, or the Southwestern Power Administration to purchase or market any of the power produced by the facilities covered under this subsection and none of the costs associated with production or delivery of such power shall be assigned to project purposes for inclusion in project rates.

''(6) Nothing in this subsection shall alter or impede the delivery and management of water by Bureau of Reclamation facilities, as water used for conduit hydropower generation shall be deemed incidental to use of water for the original project purposes. Lease of power privilege shall be made only when, in the judgment of the Secretary, the exercise of the lease will not be incompatible with the purposes of the project or division involved, nor shall it create any unmitigated financial or physical impacts to the project or division involved, and shall be on such terms and conditions as in the judgment of the Secretary in consultation with the appropriate irrigation district or water users association, will adequately protect the planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and other interests of the United States and the project or division involved.

''(7) Nothing in this subsection shall alter or affect any existing agreements for the development of conduit hydropower projects or disposition of revenues.

''(8) In this subsection:

''(A) CONDUIT.—The term 'conduit' means any Bureau of Reclamation tunnel, canal, pipeline, aqueduct, flume, ditch, or similar manmade water conveyance that is operated for the distribution of water for agricultural, municipal, or industrial consumption and not primarily for the generation of electricity.

''(B) IRRIGATION DISTRICT.—The term 'irrigation district' means any irrigation, water conservation, multicounty water conservation district, or any separate public entity composed of two or more such districts and jointly exercising powers of its member districts.

''(C) RESERVED WORK.—The term 'reserved work' means any conduit that is included in project works the care, operation, and maintenance of which has been reserved by the Secretary, through the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation.

''(D) TRANSFERRED WORK.—The term 'transferred work' means any conduit that is included in project works the care, operation, and maintenance of which has been transferred to a legally organized water users association or irrigation district.

''(E) SMALL CONDUIT HYDROPOWER.—The term 'small conduit hydropower' means a facility capable of producing 5 megawatts or less of electric capacity.''.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those received for printing in the portion of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD designated for that purpose dated at least 1 day before the day of consideration of the amendment and pro forma amendments for the purpose of debate.

Each amendment so received may be offered only by the Member who submitted it for printing or a designee and shall be considered as read if printed.

Are there any amendments to the bill?

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. TIPTON

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chairwoman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, strike lines 14 through 18, and insert the following:

''(3) The Bureau of Reclamation shall apply its categorical exclusion process under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) to small conduit hydropower development under this subsection, excluding siting of associated transmission facilities on Federal lands.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chairwoman, I offer this amendment in response to the concerns of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and at the request of the broad range of irrigation districts, water conservation and conservancy districts, and public utilities that are supporting this bill and this commonsense amendment. I'm pleased to have the support of my Democratic colleague JIM COSTA on this effort and the support of the National Hydropower Association, the Family Farm Alliance, the National Water Resources Association, and the American Public Power Association.

This amendment removes the NEPA waiver in the bill and instead codifies the application of the Bureau of Reclamation's categorical exclusion process under the National Environmental Policy Act for small hydropower projects covered by this bill.

This alternative provision would still ensure streamlining the approval process for clean renewable energy and help provide certainty for investors and job creators, while providing flexibility to the Bureau to adjust to changing circumstances moving forward. By advancing these projects under the Bureau's categorical exclusion process, we ensure that all of the elements in that process are retained, including agency discretion for examining extraordinary circumstances. In addition, the amendment specifically mentions codifying the categorical exclusion process for small conduit hydropower.

This is an approach that is supported by Trout Unlimited in its March 19, 2013 letter, which states:

> Congress should direct BOR to create a categorical exclusion for small conduit hydropower.

That's exactly what this amendment does.

The use of a categorical exclusion for small conduit hydropower development can mean the difference between private investment in a public good with a multitude of benefits, and unreasonable financial costs and lengthy delays that lead to untapped potential.

My hope is that this amendment, which is broadly supported by the diverse range of groups invested in the bill who are committed to ensuring continued environmental protection, will assuage any reservations about this effort to promote clean renewable energy and allow us to be able to move forward united in our support.

□ 1430

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIPTON. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for offering this amendment. I think it adds a great deal to all the work that you and your bipartisan cosponsors had put into this, and I support the amendment.

Mr. TIPTON. Reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

With that, Madam Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to Tipton amendment No. 3 for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

We are glad to see the author of the legislation recognizes that in developing conduit hydropower projects, NEPA is not the problem and that the flat NEPA waiver included in the base bill is not good policy.

We also welcome the apparent realization that insisting on an unwarranted and unwise NEPA waiver has been the anchor that has held this bill back and prohibited this largely noncontroversial measure from becoming law.

But to be clear, this amendment only tweaks language that should be removed from the bill entirely. The Tipton amendment circles around the edge of the problem while my amendment, which I'll offer in a few minutes, solves the problem by removing the waiver completely so we can move forward and support the bill.

Better yet, if the waiver is removed, there is no need for the artificially low cap on the size of these projects contained in the base bill, which is why my amendment will increase the cap from 5 to 15 megawatts. The Tipton amendment does nothing to raise the cap on these projects.

The Tipton amendment is a significant step in the right direction for the bill's sponsor, and we will not oppose it and will work with the sponsor and Senate to perfect the language. However, my amendment, which we'll see momentarily, is better energy policy and better environmental policy. The amendment is a start, this particular amendment, but I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on my amendment to really fix this legislation.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COSTA. Madam Chair, the legislative process is a two way street. It's about listening and incorporating the concerns of our colleagues to improve a bill. This amendment does just that.

Environmental review is important, but it needs to be an appropriate level of review for the project involved. On these types of projects, there isn't much chance of damage, so there shouldn't be much cost involved for review.

Reclamation recognizes this and has made great strides in easing the way for small hydro development on the agency's projects. However, potential legal conflicts have prevented them from fully implementing this process.

This amendment would bridge the legal gap and clarify questions that have kept the Bureau from moving forward. Specifically, the amendment would codify the steps Reclamation is already taking to ease the way for responsible small conduit hydropower development while also resolving potential litigation concerns.

This is a commonsense amendment that has been endorsed by American Rivers, Trout Unlimited, the Family Farm Alliance, the National Water Resources Association, and the National Hydropower Association.

I urge you to support this amendment and support the underlying bill.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS. NAPOLITANO

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I rise to offer the Napolitano amendment identified as amendment No. 1 in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

> Page 4, strike lines 14 through 18 (and redesignate subsequent provisions accordingly).
>
> Page 7, line 13, strike ''5'' and insert ''15''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, my amendment is very simple. It would strike the NEPA, known as the National Environmental Policy Act, waiver and give the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation, the authority to apply Reclamation's directives and standards for lease of power privilege projects, which is known as LOPP.

The Bureau of Reclamation on its own accord has applied a categorical exclusion, known as CE, to small conduit hydropower projects. In fact, their CE went even further. It can be used to expedite a wide variety of low-impact hydropower projects built on Reclamation's water infrastructure. The main point of the legislation is to clarify that Reclamation has jurisdiction over the development of conduit projects on Reclamation facilities.

As I have mentioned before, the sponsor's amendment only tweaks the language that should be removed from the bill entirely. The Tipton amendment tinkers around the edge of the problem while my amendment solves the problem by removing the waiver completely.

As a compromise, my amendment also increases the megawatt limitation from 5 to 15 megawatts for small conduit hydro projects. This would allow for more power to be created at those existing facilities. Without the NEPA waiver, the agency can utilize its own categorical exclusion, which has no megawatt limitation, and therefore makes the cap on this legislation arbitrary. The NEPA waiver is unnecessary, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on my amendment.

Let me point out that it is my understanding that there have been some projects built under the current—not the CE—that have taken a lot more time and have been costly. And with a categorical exclusion, there will be a cut not only in the cost but in time because it only involves staff and the cost will be diminished.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chair, I just want to make a point because at the end of the general debate, I brought up the issue of NEPA that everybody says this is a wonderful bill except this part. Of course, the gentlelady's amendment strikes the NEPA waiver, which I pointed out again at the end of the general debate there seems to be somewhat cause and effect of having NEPA and having projects go forward.

But here is the important point on this, Madam Chairman, from my point of view: this bill deals with the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Reclamation that built ditches and conduits out of concrete generally. Again, I spoke of the Columbia Basin Project in my district and the Yakima Project in my district, and virtually all of the ditches are concrete. That means that the land has already been disturbed in order to put these facilities in place.

What the gentleman from Colorado's bill does is simply put a power source within the existing ditches that have gone through environmental review. Why, for goodness' sakes, would you have to jump through more hoops, unless you wanted to slow the process down? Why you'd want to do that, I don't know, because the end result of this is probably less expensive energy. It's certainly American jobs, and it probably adds to a growing economy. Yet there seems to be some idea that only NEPA can save us from all of that.

Well, I reject that, and that's why I oppose the gentlelady's amendment because it would waive that requirement.

Once again, Madam Chairman, this is on existing facilities that have gone through environmental review. It doesn't need to jump through that hoop one more time.

With that, I urge opposition to this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chairman, we've heard talk today about creating American jobs on American soil to be able to create American energy. No bill better achieves that end than H.R. 678.

The Napolitano amendment, by striking the provision altogether that she is offering, will allow no alternative to be able to streamline the projects' approval process, and this amendment literally will ensure that small investment in small hydropower projects would not be able to be achieved. I think it's important to note we're spending $1.750 trillion per year in regulatory costs in this Nation.

Now, are all regulations bad? No, they aren't. But redundant regulations which drive up costs, which inhibit our ability to be able to create jobs to be able to put Americans back to work and to be able to create clean, affordable energy should not stand in the way.

Let's put Americans back to work. Let's work together.

The purpose of my amendment is to be able to reach a reasonable compromise between the two opposing ideas in regards to the NEPA provision on manmade projects. As Chairman HASTINGS just ably noted, these are manmade ditches. We have no impediment that's going to be looked at when it comes to endangered species, be it fish or wildlife. This has already gone through the desired process of environmental review. So does it make good common sense to say that an area that's been reviewed that was made by men does not have to go through an additional review process in order to be able to create those jobs and to be able to create American energy? I think that's a sensible approach for us to be able to pursue.

With that, I would urge opposition and defeat of the Napolitano amendment.

Let's get this job done and let's truly work to get Americans back to work.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Chairman, this amendment strikes the NEPA exclusion for small hydroelectric projects. That's the principal point of the bill.

As the Subcommittee on Water and Power has repeatedly been told, it is precisely this process that has doubled the cost of small hydro projects simply making them cost prohibitive. This is akin to having a full environmental review done when you build your home and then having to do it all over again when you want to install a microwave in your kitchen.

□ 1440

One witness testified that installing 15 very small hydropower units on a nearby Bureau of Reclamation canal system would cost over $450,000, or $30,000 per unit, for additional NEPA reviews that would ultimately conclude that there is no environmental impact.

That means the paperwork costs would be greater than the actual capital cost of the hydropower units. No one in his right mind would invest in a project with this kind of requirement. It simply makes no sense, and that's the primary reason conduit hydropower development is not happening.

It is true that the Bureau of Reclamation instituted a new NEPA Categorical Exclusion for small hydroelectric projects back in September of 2012, but 6 months later, this new policy has resulted in precisely zero new projects moving forward. Even if projects were moving forward today, this is only an administrative change and could be changed back at any time.

In addition, an expert witness who happens to be a litigator testified to our subcommittee that the current administrative process is full of legal holes that could be exploited by those wanting to stop these projects. Investors need certainty, and that requires a statutory and not an administrative fix.

I appreciate and support the gentlelady's effort to allow the Bureau to consider units with 15 megawatts, but I would remind her that zero projects times 15 megawatts still equals zero electricity. Indeed, there are practically no projects in this range to begin with, which makes the amendment somewhat disingenuous. Even if there were, if the current regulatory scheme isn't allowing 5-megawatt units, it certainly won't allow 15-megawatt units. That's the problem.

Mr. TIPTON's bill provides an automatic exclusion from this duplicative and destructive NEPA requirement. The gentlelady's amendment takes it back out again. That's not constructive and it's not helpful.

To assure us that one supports small hydropower but opposes the automatic exclusion in Mr. TIPTON's bill reminds me of Leo Tolstoy's observation when he said:

> I sit on a man's back, choking him and making him carry me, and all the while, I assure him and anyone who will listen that I am sympathetic for his plight and I am willing to do everything I can to help—except by getting off his back.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. TIPTON

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chairwoman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

> Page 4, line 4, insert ''(A)'' after ''(2)''.
>
> Page 4, lines 8 and 10, strike ''work'' and insert ''conduit''.
>
> Page 4, line 13, after ''offer'' insert ''for a small conduit hydropower project''.
>
> Page 4, after line 13, insert the following:
>
> ''(B) If the irrigation district or water users association elects not accept a lease of power privilege offer under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall offer the lease of power privilege to other parties in accordance with this subsection.''.

Page 4, line 21, after ''hydropower'' insert ''policy and procedure-setting''.

Page 5, line 18 strike ''involved, and'' and all that follows though line 25 and insert the following ''involved. The Secretary shall notify and consult with the irrigation district or water users association operating the transferred conduit before offering the lease of power privilege and shall prescribe terms and conditions that will adequately protect the planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and other interests of the United States and the project or division involved.''.

Page 6, after line 4, insert the following:

''(8) Nothing in this subsection shall alter or affect any existing preliminary permit, license, or exemption issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission under Part I of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 792, et seq.) or any project for which an application has been filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as of the date of the enactment of the Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act.''.

Page 6, line 5, strike ''(8)'' and insert ''(9)''.

Page 6, strike lines 14 through 20, and insert the following:

(B) IRRIGATION DISTRICT.—The term ''irrigation district'' means any irrigation, water conservation or conservancy, multicounty water conservation or conservancy district, or any separate public entity composed of two or more such districts and jointly exercising powers of its member districts.

Page 6, line 21, strike ''WORK'' and insert ''CONDUIT''.

Page 6, line 22, strike ''work'' and insert ''conduit''.

Page 7, line 3, strike ''WORK'' and insert ''CONDUIT''.

Page 7, line 4, strike ''work'' and insert ''conduit''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chairwoman, I offer this amendment to provide technical corrections and to eliminate drafting inconsistencies between this year's bill and its counterpart in the 112th Congress.

This amendment reflects changes sought by the Bureau of Reclamation with respect to definitions, to more accurately cover intended matters and properly coincide with existing law and Bureau regulations. Furthermore, the amendment clarifies that nothing in the bill affects existing arrangements between irrigation and water districts and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIPTON. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

As you say, I think this is a technical amendment. It adds to the bill, and I support it.

Mr. TIPTON. With that, Madam Chairwoman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chairwoman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. The gentleman's amendment makes technical changes that staff has brought to our attention, and it addresses a few of the administration's concerns.

The amendment clarifies that the projects already permitted under FERC would not see any regulatory uncertainty with this bill's passage. We are also in agreement with the amendment changes that require greater consultation with irrigation districts and water user associations prior to the approval of the Lease of Power Privilege.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS. NAPOLITANO

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 189, noes 232, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 94]

AYES—189

Andrews
Barber
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—232

Aderholt
Alexander
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Radel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack

Woodall	Yoho	Young (FL)
Yoder	Young (AK)	Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—10

Bass	Hastings (FL)	Ros-Lehtinen
Castor (FL)	Kinzinger (IL)	Walz
Collins (NY)	Lynch	
Franks (AZ)	Markey	

□ 1514

Messrs. HENSARLING, LAMALFA, STEWART, and YOUNG of Alaska changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. CLARKE, and Messrs. DOGGETT and CICILLINE changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Madam Chair, on rollcall No. 94, H.R. 678, Agreeing to the Amendment, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

The Acting CHAIR. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) having assumed the chair, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 678) to authorize all Bureau of Reclamation conduit facilities for hydropower development under Federal Reclamation law, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 140, she reported the bill back to the House with sundry amendments adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole? If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. GARAMENDI. I'm opposed in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Garamendi moves to recommit the bill H.R. 678 to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 3. MAKE IT IN AMERICA.

Any lease of power privilege offered pursuant to this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall require, to the extent practicable, that all materials used for conduit hydropower generation be manufactured in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I suspect that, Mr. Speaker, all of us would want to see more jobs in America. The great American manufacturing sector over the last 20 years has lost about 9 million jobs. Twenty-five years ago, no one throughout this world would doubt that the greatest manufacturing Nation in the world was America. Twenty-five years later, and 9 million jobs having been lost, America has lost its preeminence—or is about to lose its preeminence. It would seem to me it's our job here as representatives of the American public and the American economy to do everything we possibly can to rebuild and reestablish the great American manufacturing sector, to do everything we can to restore to America those 9 million middle class jobs that have been lost to outsourcing, to our companies moving overseas, and to some rather impractical and rather foolish laws that have been passed and are on the books.

□ 1520

There is something we can do today with this bill. This bill, while seeming to be small, ought to be our very first step this session to make sure that in every piece of legislation we pass there would be an incentive, an obligation, or an advantage for American manufacturers.

Small hydro, who's to care about small hydro? Well, there are four businesses in America that would care a great deal about small hydro. In New Mexico, the Elephant Butte Irrigation District develops low-cost small hydro. Canyon Hydro in Deming, Washington, manufactures and produces small hydro. NATEL Energy Company in Alameda, California, manufactures small hydro programs. And James Leffel & Company in Springfield, Ohio, manufactures the machinery for small hydro. This bill would provide an opportunity for these four American companies to build these small hydro projects, made in America, made by Americans.

The amendment that I'm proposing simply says, in addition to what is in this bill, that we add a simple paragraph that says:

In all practical purposes, the machinery that is to be constructed and used in these projects shall be made in America by American workers.

One small step, but a necessary step, and one step along the way to rebuilding the American manufacturing sector.

We can do this. There are those who say that, well, we're not making it. Well, we are making it. And when we write laws that require that it be made in America, guess what? Things are made in America.

In that stimulus bill—whatever you may think it, good or bad—there was a provision written in that Amtrak was to have some new locomotives. Someone put in an additional sentence that said these must be 100 percent made in America. Siemens, the German company, came forward and said: We can do that. And in Sacramento, California today, a half-billion-dollar contract is being executed for numerous electric locomotives for Amtrak, 100 percent American made.

We can establish the policies to make it in America and to rebuild the great American manufacturing sector. We ought to be using all of our tax money whenever we purchase something to be made in America. If we're going to subsidize solar panels or wind turbines or even hydro projects, then let it be American manufacturers that get that money—to be made in America. Simple, but it's up to us. It's up to 435 of us.

What is to be our policy? Are we going to encourage American manufacturing with something as simple as this amendment, or are we simply going to shrug our shoulders and ignore the fact that 9 million American manufacturing jobs have been lost? Are we to ignore our responsibility to bring those jobs back here? I don't think there's one of us among the 435 of us here, Mr. Speaker, that would say: not to worry, let it be. No, I think all of us, Mr. Speaker, would want to bring the American manufacturing jobs back.

This amendment—which would be the final amendment to the bill and which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee—this amendment, if adopted, would proceed immediately to passage and give to American workers a small but significant opportunity to have a well-paying middle class job and once again America being the undisputed leader in manufacturing.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, during the course of debate today, it was mentioned several times—which of course is true—that virtually identical legislation passed in the last Congress with bipartisan support. I find it rather ironic that the author of this motion to recommit last year voted for this bill without the motion to recommit language in it. So I think we have some common ground and we're making some progress, and I thank the gentleman for his vote on that.

But let's talk about what this bill does. This bill takes existing American facilities, like irrigation ditches, and says, my goodness, water running downhill has a sense of energy to it; we ought to somehow capture that energy. The gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) says: Why don't we put turbines in there and create American energy? Wonderful idea. So that's what this bill

is all about. Nothing in this bill prevents anything that the gentleman is proposing in his motion to recommit.

But I will just close by saying what this bill really does and what the essence of what we're talking about here today. This bill creates American jobs and American energy at no cost to the taxpayer. What else is there to say? Vote ''no'' on the motion to recommit.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. The gentleman had 5 minutes to make his case. No, I will not yield to the gentleman.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 194, nays 226, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 95]

YEAS—194

Andrews
Barber
Barrow (GA)
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—226

Aderholt
Alexander
Amash
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Radel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—11

Amodei
Bass
Castor (FL)
Collins (NY)
Cramer
Hastings (FL)
Kinzinger (IL)
Lynch
Markey
Ros-Lehtinen
Walz

□ 1536

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 95, H.R. 678, On Motion to Recommit with Instructions, had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 416, nays 7, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 96]

YEAS—416

Aderholt
Alexander
Amash
Amodei
Andrews
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bonner
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Cotton
Courtney
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grijalva
Grimm
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Hudson

Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lee (CA)
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Maffei
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moran
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quigley
Radel
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Speier
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—7

Dingell
Johnson (GA)
Levin
Maloney, Carolyn
Moore
Sires
Smith (WA)

NOT VOTING—8

Castor (FL)
Collins (NY)
Cramer
Hastings (FL)
Lynch
Markey
Ros-Lehtinen
Walz

□ 1546

Messrs. PALLONE, POCAN, SWALWELL of California and Ms. DUCKWORTH changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So 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:

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Madam Chair, on rollcall No. 96, H.R. 678, On Passage, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113–3)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Thanks to the hard work and determination of the American people, we have made significant progress over the last 4 years. After a decade of war, our brave men and women in uniform are coming home. After years of recession, our businesses have created over six million new jobs. We buy more American cars than we have in 5 years, and less foreign oil than we have in 20 years. Our housing market is healing, our stock market is rebounding, and consumers, patients, and homeowners enjoy stronger protections than ever before.

But we know that there are millions of Americans whose hard work and dedication have not yet been rewarded. Our economy is adding jobs—but too many people still cannot find full-time employment. Corporate profits have skyrocketed to all-time highs—but for more than a decade, wages and incomes have barely budged.

It is our generation's task to reignite the true engine of America's economic growth—a rising, thriving middle class. It is our unfinished task to restore the basic bargain that built this country—the idea that if you work hard and meet your responsibilities, you can get ahead, no matter where you come from, no matter what you look like, or whom you love.

It is our unfinished task to make sure that this Government works on behalf of the many, and not just the few; that it encourages free enterprise, rewards individual initiative, and opens the doors of opportunity to every child across this great Nation.

A growing economy that creates good, middle class jobs—this must be the North Star that guides our efforts. Every day, we should ask ourselves three questions as a Nation: How do we attract more jobs to our shores? How do we equip our people with the skills they need to get those jobs? And how do we make sure that hard work leads to a decent living?

This Budget seeks to answer each of these questions.

Our first priority is making America a magnet for new jobs and manufacturing. After shedding jobs for more than 10 years, our manufacturers have added more than 500,000 jobs over the past 3 years. Companies large and small are increasingly deciding to bring jobs back to America.

To accelerate this trend, the Budget builds on the success of the manufacturing innovation institute we created in Youngstown, Ohio last year, and calls for the creation of a network of 15 of these hubs across the Nation. In these innovation hubs, businesses will partner with universities and Federal agencies to turn regions around our country into global centers of high-tech jobs.

The Budget also includes new initiatives to support manufacturing communities, including a new tax credit to strengthen their ability to attract investments and jobs. And it expands my Administration's SelectUSA initiative to help draw businesses and investment from around the world to our shores.

If we want to make the best products, we also have to invest in the best ideas. That is why the Budget maintains a world-class commitment to science and research, targeting resources to those areas most likely to contribute directly to the creation of transformational technologies that can create the businesses and jobs of the future.

No area holds more promise than our investments in American energy. The Budget continues to advance my ''all-of-the-above'' strategy on energy, investing in clean energy research and development; promoting energy efficiency in our cars, homes, and businesses; encouraging responsible domestic energy production; and launching new efforts to combat the threat of climate change.

Modeled after my successful Race to the Top education reform effort, the Budget includes a new Race to the Top energy efficiency challenge for States, rewarding those that implement the most effective policies to cut energy waste. And it establishes a new Energy Security Trust funded by royalty revenue from oil and gas leases to support initiatives to shift our cars and trucks off oil, cutting our Nation's reliance on foreign oil.

Over the last 4 years, we have begun the hard work of rebuilding our Nation's infrastructure. We have built or improved over 350,000 miles of road and more than 6,000 miles of rail. And we have repaired or replaced over 20,000 bridges. But to compete in the 21st Century economy and become a magnet for jobs, we must do more. We need to repair our existing infrastructure, and invest in the infrastructure of tomorrow, including high-speed rail, high-tech schools, and self-healing power grids. These investments will both lay the foundation for long-term economic growth and put workers back on the job now.

My Budget includes $50 billion for upfront infrastructure investments, including a ''Fix-it-First'' program that makes an immediate investment to put people to work as soon as possible on our most urgent repairs, like the nearly 70,000 structurally-deficient bridges across the country. And to make sure taxpayers do not shoulder the whole burden, the Budget creates a Rebuild America Partnership to attract private capital to upgrade what our businesses need most: modern ports to move our goods; modern pipelines to withstand a storm; and modern schools worthy of our children.

The Budget also supports efforts I announced earlier this year to modernize and improve the efficiency of the Federal permitting process, cutting through the red tape that has been holding back even some of the most carefully planned infrastructure projects. These efforts will help us to achieve the new goal I set to cut timelines in half for infrastructure projects, while creating new incentives for better outcomes for communities and the environment.

All of these initiatives in manufacturing, energy, and infrastructure will help entrepreneurs and small business owners expand and create new jobs. But none of it will matter unless we also equip our citizens with the skills and training to fill those jobs.

And that has to start at the earliest possible age. But today, fewer than 3 in 10 4-year-olds are enrolled in a high-quality preschool program, and the high cost of private preschool puts too much of a financial burden on middle class families.

The Budget therefore includes a proposal that ensures 4-year-olds across the country have access to high-quality preschool education through a landmark new initiative in partnership with the States. And it increases the availability of early learning for our youngest children to help their growth and development during the formative early years of life.

Providing a year of free, public preschool education for 4–year-old children is an important investment in our future. It will give all our kids the best start in life, helping them perform better in elementary school and ultimately helping them, and the country, be better prepared for the demands of the global economy. Not only that, it could save hard-working families thousands of dollars each year in child care costs. This is an investment we need to make, and it is fully paid for in this Budget by imposing a new tax on every pack of cigarettes sold.

The Budget also builds on the historic reforms made during my first term to improve our elementary and secondary school system by rewarding excellence and promoting innovation. To help ensure that our high schools are putting our kids on a path to college and a good job, the Budget includes a new competitive fund that will help redesign America's high schools to prepare students with the real world skills they need to find a job right away or go to college. The fund rewards schools that develop new partnerships with colleges and employers, and create classes focusing on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)—the skills today's employers seek to fill the jobs available right now and in the future.

Even with better high schools, most young people will still need some higher education. Through tax credits, grants, and better loans, we have made college more affordable for millions of students and families over the last 4 years. But skyrocketing costs are still pricing too many young people out of a higher education, or saddling them with unsustainable debt. And taxpayers cannot continue to subsidize higher and higher costs for higher education.

To encourage colleges to do their part to keep costs down, the Budget includes reforms that will ensure affordability and value are considered in determining which colleges receive certain types of Federal aid. My Administration has also released a new ''College Scorecard'' that parents and students can use to compare schools.

To further ensure our educational system is preparing students for careers in the 21st Century economy, the Budget includes additional measures to promote STEM education, such as launching a new STEM Master Teacher Corps, to leverage the expertise of some of America's best and brightest teachers in science and mathematics, and to elevate the teaching of these subjects nationwide. It also includes a reorganization and consolidation of STEM education programs to improve the effectiveness of Federal investments in this area.

The Budget takes other critical steps to grow our economy, create jobs, and strengthen the middle class. It implements the Affordable Care Act, giving every American access to the high-quality, affordable health care coverage they deserve, and reducing the deficit by more than $1 trillion over the next two decades. It implements Wall Street reform, ending too-big-to-fail and protecting consumers against the abuses and reckless behavior that contributed to the financial collapse in 2008. And it includes measures to strengthen our housing market and ensure that every responsible homeowner has the opportunity to refinance at today's rates, saving $3,000 a year on average.

Our economy is stronger when we harness the talents and ingenuity of striving, hopeful immigrants. That is why I have proposed a plan to fix our broken immigration system that secures our borders, cracks down on employers who hire undocumented workers, attracts highly-skilled entrepreneurs and engineers to help create jobs and drive economic growth, and establishes a responsible pathway to earned citizenship—a path that includes passing a background check, paying taxes and a meaningful penalty, learning English, and going to the back of the line behind the folks trying to come here legally. The Budget makes investments that will make our immigration system more efficient and fair and lay a foundation for this permanent, common-sense reform.

The Budget also builds on the progress made over the last 4 years to expand opportunity for every American and every community willing to do the work to lift themselves up. It creates new ladders opportunity to ensure that hard work leads to a decent living. It rewards hard work by increasing the minimum wage to $9 an hour so an honest day's work pays more. It partners with communities by identifying Promise Zones to help rebuild from the recession. It creates pathways to jobs for the long-term unemployed and youth who have been hardest hit by the downturn. And it strengthens families by removing financial deterrents to marriage and supporting the role of fathers.

We also know that economic growth can only be achieved and sustained if America is safe and secure, both at home and abroad. At home, the Budget supports my initiative to help protect our kids, reduce gun violence, and expand access to mental health services. We can protect our Second Amendment rights while coming together around reforms like eliminating background check loopholes to make it harder for criminals to get their hands on a gun—common-sense reforms that will help protect our kids from the scourge of gun violence that has plagued too many communities across the country.

To confront threats outside our borders, the Budget ensures our military remains the finest and best-equipped military force the world has ever known, even as we wind down more than a decade of war.

Already, we have brought home more than 30,000 of our brave servicemembers from Afghanistan. Our remaining forces are moving into a support role, with Afghan security forces taking the lead. And over the next year, another 34,000 American troops will come home. This drawdown will continue and, by the end of next year, our war in Afghanistan will be over. Beyond 2014, the Budget supports our continued commitment to a unified and sovereign Afghanistan.

To maintain our national security, the Budget supports our ongoing fight against terrorists, like al Qaeda. The organization that attacked us on 9/11 is a shadow of its former self. But different al Qaeda affiliates and extremist groups have emerged—from the Arabian Peninsula to Africa. We will confront these emerging security challenges through the full range of U.S. capabilities and tools, including diplomatic, security, intelligence, and economic development.

The Budget also provides the resources we need to act on our commitment to and interests in global development, by promoting food security that reduces dependence and increases prosperity; by investing in the increasingly successful drive toward an AIDS-free generation; and by maintaining our leadership as a global provider of humanitarian assistance that saves lives and reflects American values.

We must also confront new dangers, like cyber attacks, that threaten our Nation's infrastructure, businesses, and people. The Budget supports the expansion of Government-wide efforts to counter the full scope of cyber threats, and strengthens our ability to collaborate with State and local governments, our partners overseas, and the private sector to improve our overall cybersecurity.

The Budget also focuses resources on the Asia-Pacific region, reasserting American leadership and promoting security, stability, democracy, and economic growth.

Importantly, the Budget upholds our solemn obligation to take care of our servicemembers and veterans, and to protect our diplomats and civilians in the field. It keeps faith with our veterans, investing in world-class care, including mental health care for our wounded warriors, supporting our military families, and giving our veterans the benefits, education, and job opportunities that they have earned.

The Budget does all of these things as part of a comprehensive plan that reduces the deficit. All of these initiatives and ideas are fully paid for, to ensure they do not increase the deficit by a single dime.

By making investments in our people that we pay for responsibly, we will strengthen the middle class, make America a magnet for jobs and innovation, and grow our economy, which will in turn help us to reduce deficits. But economic growth alone will not solve our Nation's long-term fiscal challenges.

As we continue to grow our economy, we must take further action to cut our deficits. We do not have to choose between these two important priorities—we have to do both.

Over the last 4 years, both parties have worked together to reduce the deficit in a balanced way by more than $2.5 trillion. That is more than halfway toward the goal of $4 trillion in deficit reduction that economists say we need to stabilize our finances. As we wind down two wars, we have protected our military families and veterans while cutting defense spending on outdated military weapons systems. Domestic discretionary spending is approaching its lowest levels as a share of the economy since President Eisenhower was in office; and we have moved aggressively to cut waste, fraud, and abuse. And together, we have begun to ask the wealthy to do their fair share while keeping income taxes low for middle class families. Overall, we have cut the deficit in a balanced way that protects the investments in education, manufacturing, clean energy, and small businesses we need to grow the economy and strengthen the middle class. There is more work to do, and this Budget is designed to finish the job.

But we should not do it by making harsh and arbitrary cuts that jeopardize our military readiness, devastate priorities like education and energy, and cost jobs. That is not how to grow the economy. We should not ask middle class senior citizens and working families to pay down the rest of our deficit while the wealthiest are asked for nothing more. That does not grow our middle class.

The American people understand that we cannot just cut our way to prosperity. That is why I have repeatedly called for a balanced approach to deficit reduction. And that is why I have offered proposals on multiple occasions that cut wasteful spending, strengthen entitlements, and eliminate special tax breaks and loopholes so the wealthiest pay their fair share.

In my negotiations with House Speaker BOEHNER in December over the so-called ''fiscal cliff,'' I again offered a compromise proposal that was balanced and comprehensive, and would achieve our $4 trillion deficit reduction goal. That proposal is still on the table. I am including it in this Budget to demonstrate my commitment to making the kind of tough and balanced choices that are needed to put our Nation's finances in order.

To be clear, the package I am offering includes some difficult cuts that I do not particularly like. But these measures will only become law if congressional Republicans agree to meet me in the middle by eliminating special tax breaks and loopholes so millionaires and billionaires do their fair share to cut the deficit. I will not agree to any deal that seeks to cut the deficit on the backs of middle class Families. I am willing to make tough choices that may not be popular within my own party, because there can be no sacred cows for either party. And I look forward to working with any member of Congress who takes a similar, balanced approach. This plan is built on the kind of common ground that Democrats and Republicans should be able to reach.

In total, the Budget will cut the deficit by another $1.8 trillion over the next 10 years, bringing the deficit below 2 percent of GDP by 2023 and putting our debt on a declining path. This is not an end in and of itself—the best way to grow the economy and cut the deficit is by creating good middle class jobs. But this plan to reduce the deficit in a balanced way is a critical step toward ensuring that we have a solid foundation on which to build a strong economy and a thriving middle class for years to come.

Finally, this Budget continues my commitment to reforming and streamlining our Government for the 21st Century. It builds on my Campaign to Cut Waste by further targeting and eliminating wasteful spending wherever we find it. It reorganizes and consolidates agencies and programs to make them leaner and more efficient. It increases the use of evidence and evaluation to ensure we are making smart investments with our scarce taxpayer dollars. And it harnesses new technologies to allow us to do more with less.

No single Budget can solve every challenge and every problem facing the country. But this Budget shows how we can live within our means while growing our economy, strengthening the middle class, and securing our Nation's future. It is not a Democratic plan or a Republican plan. It is an American plan. And it is a plan that I hope can serve as an outline for us to write the next great chapter of the American story . . . together.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 10, 2013*.

ACCESSING NATURAL GAS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday it was reported that the United States has 2.4 quadrillion cubic feet of natural gas that can be recovered by current drilling techniques, according to a study by companies working in various shale basins across the country. That's 26 percent higher than the previous assessment, and at current consumption rates, a 90-year supply. The Marcellus shale has the largest share of resources, with an estimated 741,320 billion cubic feet.

What has caused such a jump in resources and production? Not the Federal Government, that's for sure. According to the Congressional Research Service, production of natural gas has decreased on Federal lands by 33 percent. It's the hard work and innovation of private industry, a combination of technological and drilling advances that have allowed us to access resources that were previously inaccessible, all in a responsible and environmentally friendly way. In fact, just last week, the Energy Information Administration stated that expanded use of natural gas has driven down energy-related U.S. carbon dioxide emissions to their lowest level since 1994.

America is just beginning to realize the opportunity of this growing and economically beneficial resource.

□ 1610

RECOGNIZING THE WORLD'S FOREMOST CLIMATOLOGIST, DR. JAMES HANSEN

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the storied career of America's foremost climatologist, and the world's, Dr. James Hansen. Last week Dr. Hansen retired from his position as head of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies. After 46 years at NASA, he's leaving the agency to focus his efforts on the political and legal efforts to limit greenhouse gases.

He started his career by working on the atmosphere of the planet Venus in the sixties. Luckily for the world, he changed his emphasis to the atmosphere of the Earth.

Dr. Hansen is perhaps known best for his 1988 testimony to the Senate committees that helped raise the initial broad awareness of global warming across the United States. He sounded the warning bell of the effects of climate change, and can be credited with bringing the issue to the forefront of the American conscience.

Dr. Hansen, who fittingly called the proposed building of the Keystone XL pipeline akin to the ''lighting of the carbon bomb,'' is one of the world's leading advocates of decreased fossil fuel consumption.

While his departure from the Federal climate research community will undoubtedly leave a gaping hole in NASA's climate program, I look forward to the role Dr. Hansen will take on his retirement as he pursues actions to limit emissions and his fight against the development of Keystone and other tar sands pipelines.

The future of our planet rests in the hands of scientists like Dr. Hansen, and I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing him the best of luck in his retirement. I truly hope he can continue the work that he has successfully pursued throughout his storied career in this new capacity.

THE SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MULLIN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments we just heard on the floor from my colleague from Tennessee talking about Dr. Hansen's retirement, a gentleman who has faced a great deal of criticism, including many from this Congress, because of his forceful presentation of his point of view. And time after time after time, Dr. Hansen has been proven correct.

This is the most important issue that we're really not debating in Congress. There are a group of us here who have formed the Safe Climate Caucus to be able to promote this discussion. Today we extended an invitation to the leadership of the Commerce and Energy Committee to join us on the floor of the House for a bipartisan debate, encouraging our Republican colleagues to come to the floor to be able to deal with this issue that, frankly, deserves to be in the spotlight.

We're not aware of any Republican Member who's spoken on the floor of the House about the dangers of climate change or the need to reduce emissions and prepare for its impact in this entire session of Congress. In fact, as near as we can determine, no Republican Member of Congress has even uttered the words ''climate change'' on the floor in this Congress.

It's, I suppose, better that they're not talking about it at all than what we had in the last Congress where the Republican-led House of Representatives voted 53 times to block action on climate change. My Republican colleagues voted to defund research, to block action by the EPA to control pollution, to prevent energy efficiency measures from going into effect.

Remember, one of the most comical was the assault on light bulb efficiency, an efficiency standard that was developed, admittedly, when Democrats were in charge, but signed with legislation that we worked out with the Bush administration. That was certainly a travesty.

It was interesting. The industry looked at them and shrugged and said, we're moving on, we're not going back to produce less energy-efficient light bulbs.

They voted to stop the administration from encouraging developing countries to do their part.

This year, the Republican members of the Energy and Commerce Committee, which is the committee of primary jurisdiction over energy policy, even voted against holding hearings with scientists who could explain the role of climate change in causing extreme weather, drought, heat waves and wildfires. That's why we've created the Safe Climate Caucus, to work to end the conspiracy of silence here in the House about the dangers of climate change.

But we hope, we sincerely hope, that our Republican colleagues would join us here on the floor of the House in one of these Special Orders to discuss our various approaches. If they don't agree with human-caused impacts of extreme weather events, engage in the debate to explain why. If they do agree that we are at least having extreme weather events, whether or not they're human-caused, let's debate what we should do to be protecting us from those impacts. The American public deserves no less.

So until we're able to engage our Republican colleagues in a spirited, thoughtful debate on the floor of the House, we will continue pointing out the problems that we face, the risks, the danger, the paths forward, because in 2012, there were over 3,500 weather-related records set due to extreme heat, rain, drought, cold and wind. The American public has seen that. They've suffered the consequences. They're concerned.

Hurricane Sandy was one of just 11 weather disasters last year in the United States that caused more than a billion dollars in losses, a total of over $60 billion, which taxpayers are being forced to help assume the burden.

Here in Washington, D.C., we set another record, 90 degrees today, for April 10. At the same time, there are snowstorms in Colorado.

2012 was the 36th consecutive year with a global temperature above the 20th century average. The last time there was a year with a global temperature that wasn't above average was 1976, before Jimmy Carter was elected President. We were celebrating the Bicentennial. Most of our staff here in Washington, D.C., on Capitol Hill, has never experienced a year where temperatures weren't above average.

Now, just because our Republican friends don't want to debate it, just because they have fought to prevent our initiative, doesn't mean that it's not having an economic impact. The United States Congress has appropriated $188 billion for climate-related disasters over the last 3 years.

Just 2 months ago, the Government Accountability Office released a GAO report listing the Federal Government's vulnerability to climate change impacts as one of its greatest areas of potential risk. Climate change could increase investment portfolio risk by 10 percent over the next 2 decades by disrupting supply chains.

Those of us in Congress who are noticing these problems, these changes, these challenges, are not alone. According to the Gallup poll last month, 58 percent of the American public worry a fair amount or a great deal about climate change and its impacts. Sixty-two percent of Republicans believe that America should take steps to address climate change.

Monday, Arnold Schwarzenegger joined the list of Republican politicians who now acknowledge that climate change is a serious concern, speaking at the Price School of Public Policy in California. Governor Schwarzenegger said, if we're smart, we listen to our doctors. If we're stupid, we ignore our doctors, and it takes a heart attack to realize that we should listen.

Schwarzenegger said the national climate assessment report is our physical, and these scientists can give us a prescription for what we need to do to improve our climate. It's our duty to listen to them and encourage action, action all over the country. And Republican Governor Schwarzenegger is to be commended for his vision and stepping forward.

Another of my colleagues from California is with us here this evening, and I notice that he may be willing to step in. He's been greatly concerned about infrastructure, climate, the environment in a long and distinguished career in California politics and now here in Congress.

□ 1620

We're honored that you would be willing to join us, and I would be happy to yield to you if you would like to join in this conversation.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. BLUMENAUER, I would be honored to participate in this conversation. And, Mr. Speaker, it's always a great pleasure and, in fact, important that those of us 435 that have been elected to represent the American citizens rise on the floor to speak to issues of great importance.

When all is debated, at the end of those debates I suppose we ought to say, Was that important? We debated earlier about a piece of this puzzle, but this is the most consequential issue facing the entire globe. Climate change is a very, very real challenge for the human race.

In the early nineties, I was Deputy Secretary at the Department of the Interior and was asked by the President and Vice President at the time to join in developing a strategy for America at the Kyoto Conference, which was the second international effort to come to grips with this issue. We studied the various ramifications of climate change and we predicted that what you just described in your opening statement, Mr. BLUMENAUER, would happen. And, indeed, it is happening—the climate is changing. It is warmer.

There are more extreme events, and the impact is already being perceived in those things that are most unnoticed, which is the change in the vegetation and in the flora and fauna throughout the United States. As you hike through the mountains of the Sierras, you have to go a little higher to see species, both animal and fauna, that lived at a lower elevation. They're moving up the mountain, those that can. Those that can't, for example, some species of trees and plants that aren't able to remove their roots and move up the mountain, and they're simply going to become extinct.

Now, what do we do about it? Well, there are many things we can do without actually harming the economy. In fact, there are many things we can do that will cause the economy to grow, for example, conservation. Conservation of energy is an enormously important way to conserve our money, our energy supplies, and reduce carbon emissions, because much of the energy in the United States actually comes from carbon emissions.

For example, how about better mileage in our cars? Thankfully, we have President Obama and the Democratic administration that has taken very aggressive steps to reduce the consumption of gasoline and diesel in our automobiles and trucks, thereby conserving and saving us money and simultaneously reducing greenhouse gas emission.

There are many, many other things. One bill we took up on the floor today that passed—and my amendment wasn't adopted—but, nonetheless, it is the small hydro. It's using hydropower wisely where we can, without harming the environment, but also adding to the energy production. Moving away from coal, which we know to be the single biggest source of carbon from power plants as we generate electricity, moving initially to gas-fired power plants, which have significantly less carbon emissions, and in that process, taking the steps to move to renewable power sources of all kinds—hydro, where it makes sense.

How about wind turbines? I don't have the statistics with me today, but we've made an enormous advancement in wind energy and solar energy. And by the way, if we're going to do that in the United States with our tax policies and give a tax rebate or credit, then we ought to make it in America. Have those turbines and solar panels made in America so that we not only do what is right by the environment, but we also do what it right by the American workers so that we can rebuild our American manufacturing.

There are many, many other concepts, all of which grow the economy. They don't harm the economy at all but, rather, grow the economy. Reducing emissions, not only carbon emissions, but from the coal-fired power plants, reducing rather dangerous substances like mercury and arsenic.

So we should move these things forward. Unfortunately, we are running up against a block of votes on the right side of this House—not right on policy but, rather, in location—where they are blocking the efforts that we must make to come to grips with this. My point here is that, while this is a fundamental problem for this Nation, it's also a fundamental opportunity for America to grow a new economy.

We just heard read here on the floor not more than 30 minutes ago the statement by the President of his new budget in which he makes the point that, by addressing climate change, we also address the need to rebuild the American economy and to set it on a path where we can compete and sell these technologies and products all around the world. Because this is not just an American problem, this is a national-international problem, and all of us, wherever we are, whatever country we are in, we must take action. We must take action. We cannot let this slide.

And my plea, as you made yours, Mr. BLUMENAUER, to our Republicans colleagues is: let's debate this. If you don't believe this is a problem, come to the floor and tell us why this is not a problem. If you do not believe that we should manufacture wind turbines and solar panels here in the United States and deploy them rather than continuing with the coal-based economy, then tell us why. I wait for that debate, and I'll join you in it, Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Thank you for the privilege of joining you. I see that we have another colleague. We may reopen the West Coast-East Coast show, Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Congressman GARAMENDI. Thank you for your comments and for your leadership in your native State of California on so many different levels in pressing this point. Your observation is that there's a great deal of economic opportunity. The installed wind energy has exploded in recent years. In fact, not only are we producing the energy here in the United States, it's American wind. It's not dollars that we're exporting.

Mr. GARAMENDI. If I might interrupt you for a second, there are those that would claim that this place is also a windy Chamber.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. And part of what we need to be harvesting. That's why I have a small wind energy tax credit that I think we can install here in the House Chamber. But part of what we've done with the Recovery Act has increased dramatically the amount of manufacturing that's here in the United States for that installed energy.

We are joined by one of our colleagues, Congressman TONKO from New York. Before he came to Congress, where he's been very active in these areas, he's had his own series of activities providing leadership and technology and energy efficiency.

We'd be honored for you to join in the conversation.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Representative BLUMENAUER, for leading us in this discussion. I appreciate the fact that you've brought together this thoughtful discussion, this dialogue on how we need to embrace a stronger sense of stewardship with our environment that ties to our energy policy, that ties to our economic recovery opportunities.

I have to first and foremost mention that you're right; I headed the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority in the State of New York, my last workstation before serving here in the House. I was totally surrounded by consummate professionals who make it their role, their job, their advocacy, their vocation to make a difference with energy policy that allows us to be stronger stewards of our environment and to advance this effort for renewables, for innovation that allows us to reduce that mountain of electrons that we require for the workplace, the home place, for quality of life, and allows us to use that in much more useful, measured terms so that energy efficiency is seen as our fuel of choice and that that comes before any of our energy thinking. And that provides for a greener outcome that allows us to address this phenomenon of climate change.

Now, whether or not you believe in climate change—and to me, the scientific evidence is insurmountable—but see it as an opportunity for good-paying jobs, jobs that advance research and innovation and intellect and ideas as an economy that can then transition us into a very powerful economic recovery.

But I want to make certain that I introduce onto this floor the discussion about Mother Nature and its grip on the 20th Congressional District and, before redistricting, when I represented the 21st, as major storms Irene and Lee impacted my region. People had lost,

Representative BLUMENAUER, everything for which they ever worked—houses swept into the river through storms that just, through the force of Mother Nature, overpowered communities.

□ 1630

Many houses were destroyed. Heritage crown jewel items in the region that were visitation centers and destinations, destroyed. Covered bridge, historic in nature, wiped away through the ravages of water.

This was a profound impact. Lives lost, many injured. Communities are still rebuilding, businesses are coming back, households are still abandoned. The efforts have been powerful. We've witnessed volunteerism to the Nth degree, a tremendous statement about the human heart to respond to the needs of neighbors and at times total strangers. And then this year, seeing what had happened with the ravages of Sandy, Superstorm Sandy, that impacted New England, impacted metro New York, New Jersey and beyond, Pennsylvania. These are atypical situations. Tornadoes, tropical storms, hurricanes as far north as upstate New York had been unheard of.

So there is a statement that Mother Nature is making. We are faced with this climate change phenomenon, a concept that we need to address in scientific measure, in ways that allow us to constructively build a plan that allows us to move forward, again, by enhancing the opportunities for job creation.

What I had seen through the advocacy at NYSERDA, the State Energy Research and Development Authority, was this effort for us to be the keepers of the funds that would go towards innovating and transitioning into a better reliance on renewables, using in a benign way the environment qualities that surround us—the winds, the sun, the soil, the water—in a way that allows us to respond to the needs that we have as a society for energy and to do it through intellect. The intellectual capacity of our Nation is something we constantly cultivate through education, training, higher ed, apprenticeship programs. These are forces that can then bear good news of invention, of innovation.

I have the renewable center for GE, the international center in the heart of my district. We have the R&D lab in Niskayuna. All of these places are working in a way to allow for us to look at new battery design, the linchpin to innovation that allows us to embrace, perhaps, storage of intermittence power, that it makes it more predictable and of more useful capacity. Investment in cable that allows for less line loss in the delivery, in the transporting of electrons to the source.

There are many, many ways that we can be significantly sensitive to the demands on our society for energy and not to be wasteful, to be innovative in our approach, and to green up our thinking.

I'll say this—and I know we have others that want to speak. When I first arrived here in 2009, after the 2008 election for my first term to serve in the House, I was able to sit at the table when we formed, as Democrats, SEEC, the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition. It's a group of like-minded thinkers who want to take us in a green direction, with progressive politics, and enable us to think outside the barrel, to be able to be clever in our approach to provide for new ways to meet society's needs, to open the door to job creation, to provide for soundness of outcomes in a sustainable way that allows us to make a very bold and noble statement, and that is typically this: that we inherit this environment for the moment, and it is our task, I believe, morally to hand it over to the next generations in even better stead.

That is a daunting challenge these days. It's a daunting challenge. But in my heart I believe that we can accomplish what we need to accomplish. We can respond to the challenge by opening up to new thinking, and to not be restrained and restricted by status quo or by the disbelief that these things are happening right before our very eyes, right in the heart of our communities.

I wanted to make certain that I shared the impact on my district of Mother Nature and the clarion call to respond with urgency and with in-depth knowledge, driven by the passion to make a difference because there is always that pioneer spirit in America, and we're at our best when we embrace that inspiration and move forward as a Nation.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Congressman TONKO. I appreciate your comments. I appreciate your leadership on this issue before and after you joined Congress. And I like the notion about thinking outside the barrel.

Mr. TONKO. You're a great leader also, so thank you for leading us in this discussion and leading us routinely on sound transportation quarters, including those bicycles that don't pollute.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Indeed. Well, the cheapest electron is one that we don't have to use. If we just double American energy efficiency, we can cut carbon emissions 22 percent by 2020—and, by the way, that would save American consumers $327 billion a year. This is a tremendous opportunity to achieve savings, generate economic activity, and pay a dividend, economically as well as environmentally.

Mr. TONKO. Representative, if I might just add to that statement, the many discussions I have had with constituents who say where is the wisdom in sending hundreds of billions of dollars to foreign nations—oftentimes enemies of this country—who are using American energy consumer dollars to train troops to fight our son and daughters on the battlefield.

This is a no-brainer. This gluttonous dependency on fossil-based fuels, imported to keep our energy agenda alive, has got to stop. We need to move forward—again, with the progressive thinking that I know we can embrace in this House. Get it done. So I thank you again for your leadership in this dimension.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. That last element is one that makes it so surprising that my Republican friends don't want to talk about dealing with climate change, energy efficiency on the floor, especially given the fact that an amazing stellar array of distinguished foreign policy and military experts who have identified climate change and fossil fuel dependency as a strategic vulnerability for this country, and why they have argued that we ought to move forward aggressively dealing with climate change, dealing with energy efficiency because it strengthens America, rather than sending dollars, as you point out, to people who don't necessarily share our interests or our beliefs. It has been pointed out more than once that we are financing both sides of the war on terror.

But I would like to turn, if I could, to my friend from Memphis, Congressman COHEN, who started us off this evening with a terrific 1-minute observation about Dr. Hanson's retirement. We would welcome your thoughts and further observations about our moving forward.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you. I appreciate your leadership on this issue and your scheduling this Special Order.

Dr. James Hansen did retire. He is considered the foremost climatologist in the world. As I understand it, he shared in a Nobel Prize in 2007 on this general type of issue. He's been the leading proponent of watching out for the future.

The Keystone pipeline, he's the clarion call, I guess, on the problems that that would cause to the environment in the future. Because the tar sands, to mine, is a very carbon-intensive activity. You take away the forest. You also have to use a lot of water and a lot of energy in the production. Just the production of the tar sands causes great damage to the environment, let alone the potential for damage to our country when they would travel through the pipelines. Then, when they're burnt, that's, I guess, lighting the carbon bomb and letting it go off. But Dr. Hanson studied climate and was one of the first to warn on this issue. He has retired, so we will have his voice.

I live in Memphis. It's kind of the center of the region, Oklahoma over, for tornadoes. Tornadoes have been much, much more prominent in the United States. This just isn't a quirk. Mother Nature can have her times and certain variances in her schedule, but it's obvious what's been happening with the increase in tornadoes, the droughts, the floods. The Mississippi River, it's been the lowest it's ever been in spots—and it's flooded. It had the worst floods in Memphis ever about 2 or 3 years ago, and this year the river

was its lowest. We've gone from its highest to its lowest, and something's happening; it's obvious something is happening. Scientists, almost to one, tell us that this is because of what we've done to the environment.

□ 1640

There might be two out of 100 scientists. It seems so unfortunate that the other side always grabs one or two of those people, rather than the 98.

We all have a debt and a duty to protect the Earth and, I think, looking out for issues where we do conserve, as you've said. I've got a company in Memphis I met with last week—they're really in Mississippi—called Griffin, and they have found a way to come up with a system that when a vehicle idles—and they're talking about, in their specific situation, armored cars that have a lot of going around and they idle their engines when they pick up their financial deposits—it costs a lot to the environment in burning of oil when the car is running. They've got a way where the car can be turned off and the idling of the engine can stop, but, nevertheless, the vehicle still gets air-conditioning and power. It can save a tremendous amount of gasoline and protect the environment. Hopefully, they can come within some grants that are already available to make companies that need to retrofit their vehicles to use that, but it is like raising our CAFE standards. The best way to save energy is not to have to use it and to conserve on that.

There are opportunities we have. Obviously, we have to concentrate on this. We've got to look to alternatives, and wind and solar are two of them. It's a disaster waiting to happen, and we just can't close our eyes to it. It's important that we take a leadership role in the world.

Mr. BLUMENAUER, I would like to ask you, the Defense Department that raised those issues about it being important to our national defense, were they referring to the droughts that they foresaw coming in the future with climate change and what might happen in some of those countries where they have less opportunity to produce food and have water, et cetera?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Well, the threats are manyfold.

One is just when we are subjecting our armed services to try and deal with the extremes that you talked about, it's unpredictable. They have to be dealing with drought and with flood extreme weather events. When we find the disruption that occurs in other parts of the world with drought and with famine, it provides an instability that creates a security challenge for us. And the fact that we are vulnerable still, in terms of energy supply for the United States and for our allies and the world economy can be held hostage, all of these were part of this challenge.

Last but not least, the Department of Defense, the United States military, is the largest consumer of energy in the world. Energy supply, energy cost, energy efficiency is a matter of military readiness and operational efficiency. When we spend $18 billion for air-conditioning in Iraq and Afghanistan, that's a drain on the budget. When we are sending to the front tanker trucks, because we are so dependent on fossil fuel, they might as well have a great big bull's-eye on them. We've lost thousands of Americans on these fuel convoys.

Being able to be energy efficient, being able to stretch the dollars, being able to promote American security is all part of an equation where these experts are saying, it ought to be a no-brainer to move forward with energy efficiency. Security experts are deeply concerned about the disruptive impact globally of this uncertain climate effect.

I notice that we are joined by my colleague from the State of Oregon, Congresswoman BONAMICI, who has long exercised leadership in areas of environment and energy in her previous career as a distinguished State legislator in Oregon. I welcome her and would invite comments in conversation with us.

Ms. BONAMICI. Thank you so much, Mr. BLUMENAUER, for leading this discussion about such an important topic.

The reality of what we are talking about is really impossible to deny. We've had numerous scientists testify in Congress. You mentioned Dr. Hansen. I want to mention that his first testimony in Congress was 25 years ago. 1988 was the first time that Dr. Hansen, a well-renowned NASA scientist, testified about the problems of climate change—25 years ago. Since, so many peer-reviewed studies have shown the reality of what we are facing and the human impact, a significant contributing factor.

Not only do we have a lot of impacts on the planet, from glacial withdrawal and loss of sea ice, ocean acidification, rising temperatures and rising sea levels, we are feeling the impact here in our country with record droughts in the American Southwest and historic severe weather events. You probably have already mentioned that, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, and NASA, last year, 2012, was the warmest year on record for the United States. The 9 warmest years on record have all occurred since 1998.

I want to talk for a minute, Mr. BLUMENAUER, about some of the effects we are feeling in our home State of Oregon. We have a reputation for quality wine grapes, including the world-renowned pinot noir grape. The quality of wine is attributable to the climate in Oregon. The pinot grapes grow in a temperature range between 57 and 61 degrees, and a minor variation threatens the quality of the grapes and the value, significant value, to Oregon's economy.

Also, the district that I represent, and I know you've been out to our Oregon coast frequently, includes the shellfish industry. There's a thriving fishing community there. There's dungeness for sale on the commercial market and recreational crabbing that helps draw tourists over to the coast. In recent years, the changes have caused low oxygen content in the water. Hypoxia is the condition that results. It is creating dead zones in our ocean that kill fish, crab, and other marine life.

This is a serious problem that's affecting the industry over there. There's a shellfish hatchery, Whiskey Creek, over in Tillamook that supplies three-quarters of the oyster seed used to produce shellfish up and down the West Coast. It's an industry worth $110 million annually. Their stock of oyster seed is being threatened by the rising acidity of the ocean, which is, again, a serious impact of climate change. So right there in Oregon there's two examples, economic examples, of how our local industry is being affected.

Oregonians, I know, as well as people around this country, they're looking to us for solutions. They're looking to us for leadership. So we need to discuss how we are going to mitigate and begin to reverse these environmental and economic effects. We have a great responsibility, not only to our own home States, but to our country and the rest of the world, and we need to take a leadership role.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate that comment. I was just thinking, as you were describing the threats on our Oregon coast, to what we just read in the Washington Post a couple of days ago here where the impacts of climate change are having a profound effect on the blue crab, breeding a super crab that's actually growing more rapidly; at the same time, climate impacts are weakening the oysters, making them more vulnerable, so the potential here of completely disrupting this critical part of the ecosystem in the Chesapeake Bay.

I appreciate very much your joining in this conversation. I wish that my Republican friends would join us in the invitation to actually debate this issue in the finest tradition of the House of Representatives. There was a time when, in this Chamber, there were echoes of great challenge, debate, where people went back and forth with ideas to be able to bring out the best in us. We actually saw that when the Republicans took control 23 months ago, one of the first things they did was abolish the Special Committee on Climate Change and Global Warming, and since then we haven't really had an opportunity to engage in this fashion.

Mr. COHEN. I appreciate your bringing up the idea of the hottest year. In Memphis, it does occasionally get hot, but it also does in Washington. I think it's supposed to be 90 today. I suspect, and somebody is going to be able to prove me wrong, but this may be the hottest——

□ 1650

Mr. BLUMENAUER. It is an all-time record for today.

Mr. COHEN. I figured it was, and it's just unbelievable. And last week it was cold. I mean, I had my winter suit when I went home, and I brought my summer stuff here today.

The heat does have effects, and you brought up some of the other issues. It's not just the polar bears. I'm a big fan of the polar bears, but they're going to be eliminated because they're going to lose their ability to survive in their natural climate. Also, the flora and the fauna are at risk.

What Mr. BLUMENAUER mentioned about defense made me think of a long time ago when I was in college. There was a man I thought a lot of named Don Wolfson. He was a smart man from a family that had knowledge of power in this country. We were talking about who was the most powerful person in the country and what were the most powerful interests. I had said something about the military industrial complex and how President Eisenhower had warned us in his last address about the military industrial complex. What he warned us about really was the impact they would have on the budget and all those things. But what Don Wolfson told me was the military industrial complex is all tied to one thing: oil. That's what it's about.

The military runs on oil. And as Mr. BLUMENAUER so well pointed out, they're the most consuming user of oil, and they also at the same time are spending much of their efforts defending the trade routes to get oil. That's why the 5th Fleet is over there in Bahrain, and it is defending the Strait of Hormuz and why Iran has particular significance in the Middle East.

It's amazing what President Eisenhower warned us about, and I don't know if that was part of his warning, but maybe there was more truth to what he said and we probably should spend a part of each day reflecting on President Eisenhower's warning about the military industrial complex and what it has done to our Nation, because that's where the budget has really got a great problem, and that all goes back to our dependence on foreign oil.

Ms. BONAMICI. If I may add, too, that it calls out for continued investment in alternative technologies and energy from electric vehicles to hybrid vehicles to alternative fuels, solar power, wind power, and bicycles. We need to continue that research and investment in those alternative technologies to decrease our dependence on foreign fuel.

One of the things that I want to mention too and what we have debated here on the floor is how much we're going to spend to clean up after disasters. That is something that we have debated here on the floor.

I want to point out that a recent GAO report for the first time lists climate change as a significant financial risk to the Federal Government. We're not well positioned to address the fiscal exposure presented by climate change.

As a Nation, we've become too familiar with the consequences of waiting until the 11th hour to develop solutions. The time is now to work together, to begin to reverse these changes, to develop alternative technologies, to come up with policies that will begin to take on this very serious problem and build our economy at the same time.

And even for those who dispute or ignore the scientific evidence of climate change, we can still discuss the economic gains we can make by investing in a clean-energy economy and modernizing our infrastructure and seeking energy independence, which is also a national security issue, as you had mentioned, as well.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Absolutely.

Those 11 weather disasters last year cost us over $60 billion. It's also creating uncertainty in agriculture and in the business of insurance where it's more difficult for them to be able to calculate what they're doing. It places more burden on the Federal Government because in many cases there aren't private alternatives available. That's why we had to create flood insurance. You're touching on an area that has profound economic consequences because of this environmental instability.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. BLUMENAUER, let me ask you this—and we've worked together on the Keystone XL issue—When people come to you and say that it's going to create all these jobs, we need jobs and they can get this oil, these tar sands to China if they need to by going to the West, what do you tell folks about those jobs and the effect it will have on the future?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. It's very important for us to take a step back and evaluate exactly what the economic employment opportunities are because things that we do to rebuild and renew America in a sustainable way—Keystone has a few thousand temporary construction jobs and maybe a handful—I've heard various estimates—a few dozen, a couple hundred permanent jobs and has, as you pointed out, significant environmental consequences.

But when we're investing in wind, solar, geothermal, these are areas that are producing far more jobs already and that they are using a sustainable source of energy that pays a continuing dividend over time. This wind is American. This geothermal energy is American. It's renewable, and it doesn't cost us anything.

Mr. COHEN. Memphis borders Arkansas, and there was some kind of a pipeline problem over there recently. I think it might have been Exxon. They had a leak. That's kind of an expensive process. That's similar to the Keystone pipeline; isn't it? It gives us kind of a warning of what could occur.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Well, energy transmission is something that is a part of the broader equation.

Pipeline reliability is something that we all need to be concerned about. More fundamentally, we need to deal with the sources of energy, what is driving them, how we reduce carbon emissions, not sort of how we shift the pieces around. The priority, I think, ought to be sustainable energy, more economic investment, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, not cooking the planet.

I recently had my first two grandchildren in a course of a few months. It was interesting to me—some of these dry debates that we have that talk about by 2100, sea levels may rise 3 or 4—that always seemed kind of remote to me until I realized that these two young men, if they live as long as their great-grandmother, will be alive in the year 2100, and what we do as a Congress helps shape the world that they inherit.

That's our responsibility. That's why I deeply appreciate both of you being a part of this discussion this evening and why I hope that our Republican friends will join us in an actual debate of these policies, practices, what the choices are. Hopefully, it may actually lead to action in the floor of the House for a more sustainable future.

Ms. BONAMICI. I know we join you in that.

I also wanted to mention, while you're talking about renewable energy, the great promise of wave energy as well with the coast.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman will suspend.

Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

The gentlewoman may continue.

Ms. BONAMICI. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I know that Mr. BLUMENAUER has grandchildren. I don't yet. We owe it not only to the current generation, but to future generations to take action on these important issues.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I'm prepared to yield back, unless my friend from Memphis wants any concluding comment.

Mr. COHEN. I just want to thank you for your leadership, and it's been an honor to join you today on the floor on this issue. It's important to be addressed.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CLEARING THE NAMES OF JOHN BROW AND BROOKS GRUBER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, on April 8, which was 2 days ago, 13 years ago, 19 marines crashed and burned in Marana, Arizona. It was a very tragic time.

The Osprey, Mr. Speaker, is the plane that goes from a helicopter mode to a plane mode. At the time of the accident, it was actually in an experimental phase.

Two years after the accident—I was here at the time the accident took place—I received a letter from the wife of Brooks Gruber. He's on my far left. He was the copilot. At the time of the accident, Colonel John Brow was flying the plane. The sad thing about it is why they had 19 marines on the back. The families do not know. And quite frankly, the former commandant of the Marine Corps during the time of this accident, General Jim Jones, not a relation to me, but I think the world of him, he said to me, I don't know why in the world they did not have sacks of weight in the back instead of those 17 marines sitting back there.

□ 1700

Mr. Speaker, the problem is the lawsuits are over. I've spoken to the lawyer in Texas, Jim Furman, himself a helicopter pilot during the Vietnam war, and he represented the families of Connie Gruber and Trish Brow. In addition, Brian Alexander of New York represented 17 families. Mr. Speaker, I always believe this—I might be wrong because I'm not an attorney—that when a substantial settlement is made, then somebody was seen as being at fault.

The press release has created the problem. On July 27 of the year 2000, in the release, they make reference to a combination of human factors that caused the April 8 accident. Further stated by Marine Corps Commandant General James Jones:

> The tragedy is that these were all good marines joined in a challenging mission. Unfortunately, the pilots' drive to accomplish that mission appears to have been the fatal factor.

What the family and myself have been battling for since the year 2000 is that the experts have said that the pilots did not understand vortex ring state and how it impacts the V–22. Vortex ring state is understood in most helicopters, but the V–22 was new, and they had not done any testing at all.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read the paragraph from Connie Gruber when she asked me to look into this. This was dated December 10 of 2002:

> With so many wrongs in the world we cannot make right, I ask that you prayerfully consider an injustice that you can help make right. I realize you alone may not be able to amend the report, but you can certainly support my efforts to permanently remove this black mark from my husband's honorable military service record. Military leaders continue to refuse to amend this report, but I am certain there must be other means of making this change. Given the controversy of this aircraft and the Marine Corps' vested interest, surely there is an unbiased, ethical way to rightfully absolve these pilots. Please help me by not only forwarding my request but by also supporting it.

When I received that letter from Mrs. Gruber, I called and told her that I am a strong man of faith, and there was some reason that God put my name in her letter and that I would do everything I could to clear the names of Colonel John Brow and Major Brooks Gruber.

I'm not a pilot, Mr. Speaker—and I don't know—but I cannot really understand being a pilot or a copilot in a situation where you have not been trained, where you didn't understand the vortex ring state and how it would impact the V–22 and what you should do. That's the fault of the United States Marine Corps, and that's the fault of Bell-Boeing. Again, the lawsuits are settled, and Bell-Boeing settled for big bucks, if I can say it that way.

I want to give you just another idea. I have talked to so many people in 10 years that sometimes it gets confusing; but I think what I'm going to read, Mr. Speaker, probably tells the story as well as anything. It's from a publication called ''V–22: Wonder Weapon or Widow Maker.'' I'll read:

> That the tests addressing flying qualities and a phenomenon called ''vortex ring state'' were reduced from 103 mandated test conditions to the 33 actually flown represents a cancellation of almost 68 percent of the tests in this key area, including the crucial two at 20 and 40 knots at high gross weight specifically applicable in this accident.

This article further states:

> That aircrews were tasked with participating in that April 8 night operation without benefit of such highly relevant test results and experience represents real—and what some might label criminal—negligence on the part of those NAVAIR and Marine Corps leaders who knew both the parameters of the missing tests and the nature of this nighttime exercise. Without this prior testing experience, data and subsequent analysis, these pilots should not have been flying such a mission.

Mr. Speaker, what makes this so ironic is that, as I've shared with you, I'm in my 12th year of trying to get a letter from the United States Marine Corps that clearly states—and the facts support this—that Colonel John Brow, pilot, and Major Brooks Gruber, copilot, were not prepared to handle vortex ring state in the V–22 Osprey. That's all the wives want. You would think that we were going to be sued or something. I've got letters from the lawyers who say, No more suits. It's over.

Trish has two young boys, Michael and Matthew, and Connie has a little girl who is just as precious as she can be. It's just one of those things that, as a man of faith, you just wonder: Where is the guilt of those who ordered that mission that night? It made no sense. Dick Cheney was opposed to the Osprey, and he was really trying to scrap the program. He was Secretary of Defense at the time. So the Marine Corps ordered a mission where these three planes would go to Marana, Arizona, and they would play that they were going to recapture some Americans being held by terrorists. Really, sometimes you just wonder: Where is the heart? Where is the feeling? These gentlemen, truthfully, were known as two of the best Osprey pilots that the Marine Corps had at that time.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, I actually contacted the three marine investigators for the JAGMAN report. That is the official evaluation of the accident. Major Phil Stackhouse, Colonel Ron Radish, and Colonel Mike Morgan have all given me letters in the last year. Each one clearly states that nothing in the JAGMAN report should indicate that the pilots did anything in a deliberate way, because the pilots had not been trained.

Bell-Boeing, after being sued, hired an experimental test pilot, Tom MacDonald, who is pretty well known in the area of planes. Tom MacDonald spent 700 hours studying one issue: What happens when the V–22 gets in the vortex ring state? In 700 hours, he discovered how they should handle it, and he received a national award known as the Kincheloe.

I've talked to a lot of people in the 12 years on this issue, and the one thing that God has allowed me to understand is that His children deserve to be cleared. I am hopeful. We have back and forth sent a letter that the Marine Corps is reviewing and that the two wives have said they would be satisfied with, and our hope is that sometime in the next few weeks we will get that letter. I will go to the Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel, whom I know and have a friendship with, and I will ask him to assign someone on his immediate staff to work with me on this issue.

I hope that the Marine Corps understands that I do not want to do that, because it would bring more peace to Trish and Connie if the Marine Corps writes the letter. Again, we're probably talking about at most three sentences. Trish has said, for the public, I do not want my children, Michael and Matthew, to go on Google and read that pilot error was the cause of this accident on April 8 of 2000.

□ 1710

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, that is what would happen if any of us on this floor tonight Googled ''Osprey'' and ''April 8,'' you would see that. It indicates it was pilot error.

Sometimes I have some kids in my office, as I did today from my district, some 4–Hers, and they were asking about the things that a Member of Congress gets involved in. And I said not everything we get involved in should be or needs to be in the press. Some things that we get involved in, it's simply because our heart tells us that if you don't do it, who is going to do it? Who's going to do it if you, Congressman WALTER JONES, don't take it up?

I hope and pray that John Brow and Brooks Gruber and the 17 marines in the back will be able to rest in peace, Mr. Speaker.

Voltaire said:

> We owe the living respect; we owe the dead the truth.

That's all we're asking, is that these two marines can rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, I have said if this comes to be a reality, that I want to go to the

graves—John is buried in Arlington—with his wife and their two boys, and say, Colonel Brow, it's over. Then with Major Gruber, with his wife and little girl—he's buried in Jacksonville—is to go with them and say, Sleep, you're not at fault. Sleep.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize for getting emotional, but I just feel so passionate about this.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

HONORING GENERAL JAMES MATTIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Twenty-two minutes.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And this is probably appropriate coming after Mr. JONES speaking about the United States Marine Corps. I come before you today, Mr. Speaker, to talk about a great marine, a marine who was just in charge of Central Command and has retired and resigned after decades of service to this Nation, and let me start at the point where I was able to meet him.

Ten years ago today, the war in Iraq was under way. Nineteen days after the invasion, marines and soldiers had dismantled Saddam Hussein's regime. The takedown of Baghdad and Iraq was precise and supremely coordinated, much to the credit of Marine General James Mattis, who led the 1st Marine Division in Baghdad, and just recently completed his tour as the commander of Central Command.

On March 20, 2003, Mattis led the 1st Marine Division to the borders of Iraq. The marines' success and effectiveness, sustaining light casualties, was due to the intellect and the skill of one of the most cerebral warfighters of our lifetime, General Mattis. General Mattis is a tough man, exactly what you would expect from a United States Marine. He's practical in combat while laser-focused on securing the objective.

Let me give you an example, Mr. Speaker. On the march to Baghdad, General Mattis landed C–130s on the highway to keep vehicles and tanks moving. Mattis' marines outsmarted and overpowered Saddam's forces. In the aftermath, Mattis took a totally different tactic. It was harder to win the peace in Iraq to a certain extent than it was to win the war, but that is when Mattis let his intelligence and his outside-of-the-box thinking show through. In the aftermath, General Mattis and his commanders, working to build trust, establish alliances, and support projects that were important to the Iraqi people, befriended what some thought were the worst people in Iraq in the Anbar province where the bloody battles of Fallujah and Ramadi roared.

General Mattis was able to make friends with those sheiks and with those elders and brought about the awakening where those local tribes realized that al Qaeda was their enemy and not the Americans, and they then turned on al Qaeda in Iraq and that was able to precipitate the surge and the drawdown from Iraq where we won, largely as a testament to General Mattis' leadership.

There were a lot of other great generals—General Odierno, General Petraeus, General McChrystal, General Kelly, General Dunford, who's now in Afghanistan in charge of the International Security Assistance Force, a lot of great generals. But General Mattis stands out to me, and I would like to relay a quick experience.

When I got to Iraq in 2003, I was driving north to join the 1st Marine Division, and we got ambushed. My marine that was on the Mark 19 in the gun turret got shot in the arm. And at that point as a lieutenant, we were taught to drive out of an ambush as quick as possible and link up and go back and prosecute the enemy if we were able to. We weren't able to at this point. It was 2003. There was no radio communication at this point in time. We couldn't talk with higher headquarters. So me being the highest ranking officer in this convoy, and I was brand new in Iraq and, frankly, didn't know much about anything, we continued north to where the 1st Marine Division was headquartered in a little place called Diwaniyah.

General Mattis happened to be in the command operations center when I got there and dressed me down for not prosecuting the enemy that had ambushed my convoy. He was angry not that a marine was shot or not that we had escaped; he was angry because we didn't get after the guy that got after us. That's a real trait of General Mattis. But for a lieutenant like me who had been in country for a few hours, it was a stark awakening to, hey, you're in the war, and you have to live up to the expectations and the presence and the example set by people like Jim Mattis.

I got to meet General Mattis again in 2004 when I returned to Iraq in the battle of Fallujah. We would call General Mattis ''Chaos.'' That was his call sign because not only was he the cerebral and intellectual architect regarding a lot of what the Marine Corps did in the Anbar province, but he was also fearless. He would drive alone and unafraid by himself in his own light-armored vehicle, and he would show up anywhere he wanted to, day or night, in any kind of situation, whether there was a fire fight going on or not. And I tell you, he earned the respect, rightfully so, of every single marine and every single soldier who saw him on the front lines during those wars.

General Mattis is now CENTCOM commander. Through his leadership, CENTCOM has overseen the Afghan war with a level of confidence and strategy that is indicative of General Mattis' touch. Aspiring leaders would be smart to take a lesson from General Mattis. He well served the United States Marine Corps and America for more than 40 years.

I would argue, Mr. Speaker, that this administration with this Commander in Chief likes military leaders who agree with it, military leaders that give this administration the answers that they like to get about the way that the world is today. And they are opposed, frankly, to military leaders who give their honest opinions, regardless of who is Commander in Chief.

General Mattis is the type of person that our military needs now more than ever before. And as he prepares to leave CENTCOM, for reasons that appear to possibly hinge on politics and this administration and General Mattis' take on Iran, I can say that I speak for the marines who have served under Mattis that a leader of his kind is near impossible to replace.

I would like to read a couple of quotes. This book is called ''Victory in Iraq: How America Won.''

□ 1720

The opening page, General Mattis is featured speaking to his Marines, the 1st Marine Division, in Iraq, or in Kuwait before the invasion. Here's what he said:

> When I give you the word, we will cross the line into Iraq. For the mission's sake, our country's sake, and the sake of the men who carried the division's colors in past battles, who fought for life and never lost their nerve, carry out your mission and keep your honor clean. Demonstrate to the world that there is no better friend, no worse enemy than a United States Marine.

I would like to give General Mattis the appreciation of the entire United States House of Representatives and every single Marine, past, present and future, and every single American that owes, at least partly, the safety of this Nation to people like him and to him, literally and explicitly, for what he's done for this Nation.

Semper Fi, General Mattis. We hope that retirement treats you as well as your Marine Corps did.

I yield back the balance of my time.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1120, PREVENTING GREATER UNCERTAINTY IN LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS ACT

Ms. FOXX, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113–32) on the resolution (H. Res. 146) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1120) to prohibit the National Labor Relations Board from taking any action that requires a quorum of the members of the Board until such time as Board constituting a quorum

shall have been confirmed by the Senate, the Supreme Court issues a decision on the constitutionality of the appointments to the Board made in January 2012, or the adjournment sine die of the first session of the 113th Congress, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here. We are re-establishing the 30-Something Working Group, which some may remember. Many—it seems like many years ago, Congressman Kendrick Meek and I and Congresswoman DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ came to this floor in 2003 and 2004 and 2005 and 2006, and we were talking about issues of the day and how they applied to people in their thirties or people in their twenties, and tried to take, at that point, some of President Bush's policies and make them understandable to young people in our society.

And so we had many conversations, many late night conversations here on this House floor, sometimes an hour a night, sometimes 2 hours a night, sometimes 3, 4, 5 hours a week, coming to help deliver the message. And at that time, back in 2004 and 2005 and 2006—and let me just take a second to thank all the staff that was here for those late hours, for always being around for us, and some are still here today, as we are still here today. But today, we want to re-establish this.

Back then it was the privatization of Social Security, Mr. Speaker. And President Bush wanted to take the Social Security program and privatize it, put it in the stock market and allow that to be a part of the private investment system and not the insurance system that we have with regard to Social Security. And fortunately, we were able, through the leadership of Minority Leader PELOSI, at that time, before she was Speaker, encouraged us to go out and do this, and we were able, with her leadership, the 30-Something Group and other Members going out across the country, we were able to put a stop to the privatization of Social Security.

And fast forward just a few years, to 2008, 2009, I think there were a lot of Americans who were very happy that we did not, at that time, have the Social Security program in the stock market. Many people would have lost their retirements.

So today, we have a whole new set of challenges, and we have a new crop of very talented, young Members of Congress, members of the Democratic Caucus, who want to come to the floor and talk about the issues of the day as they pertain to young people and people who have been around a little bit, and how some of these proposals that are coming from the Republican Conference, the Republican Study Committee, the Republican Budget Committee, how some of these policies will hit the ground.

In my opinion, we seem to be governing by bumper sticker. So we want smaller government, we want less of this and less of that, and more of this and more of that, that can be phrased to sound really good on a bumper sticker to where you would drive by and you would look at the bumper sticker and you'd think, it makes a lot of sense.

But what we want to do with this working group and the folks who will be joining me here tonight and over the next several weeks and months is to say, how does this hit the ground? How does the Republican budget hit the ground?

How does it affect you? How does it affect your family? How does it affect your mom and dad? How does it affect your grandma and grandpa? And that's what we would like to talk about here today.

I think, and say this, knowing that many of the folks on the other side of the aisle are friends of mine, dear friends, good friends. Some I like to hang out with, some I don't get an opportunity to hang out with, but are all good people trying to do good things.

But why we need to come here and have this debate and discussion and conversation is that we need to figure out how we're going to move forward as a country. And our arguments on our side are that the Republican budget, the Republican approach, the Republican philosophy has caused a lot of the problems that we have in our economy today. The financial deregulation, looking the other way while Wall Street turned into a crap game, without any regulation at all, no cops on the beat keeping an eye on things.

We saw two wars put on a credit card, Afghanistan and Iraq, no taxpayer, no citizen, other than the families of the military, were asked to make any sacrifice at all, and funding for the two wars was put on a credit card. And then you throw in a prescription drug bill that was not paid for on the credit card.

So this is what happened from 2000 to 2008, where we were running up the deficit, running up the national debt. And here we arrived in 2009, after having to save the banks and do the TARP program in order to plug this trillions of dollars of a hole in our economy to make sure that the banks don't lock up and not loan money and everything else, so we had to go to the taxpayer, and the taxpayer had to foot the bill for the two wars, the prescription drug bill, and the massive deregulation of the financial markets, the too-big-to-fail, and then they failed. And so the taxpayer was asked to foot the bill.

What we are saying here on our side is that that's the wrong approach. Cutting taxes for the wealthiest in our society, this is not to punish the wealthy, this is—our approach is not to punish anybody, but what we're saying is, when the income for the top 1 percent goes up over the last 10, 15, 20 years so dramatically that the average CEO is making 300-plus times what the average worker is making, when you have the rich people that are making hundreds of millions of dollars, the top 1 percent, but then you also have the top .1 percent of the Americans who are making massive amounts of money, hedge funds and whatnot.

□ 1730

What we're saying is, when you have that imbalance and that level of inequality or it becomes a threat to the democratic way of life, that's the democracy piece, but we also have the economic piece. When you get a high concentration of wealth, then the average person doesn't have the amount of money in their pocket to be able to go out and spend in the economy.

So this is a supply side argument, cut taxes for the wealthy, this approach that our friends on the other side, the Republican Party, the Tea Party, has been pitching since 1980: cut taxes for the rich and hopefully something positive will happen for the middle class.

Democrats are saying we've got to invest in the middle class. We've got to help the middle class with health care costs, with the cost of going to school and going to college, getting a trade, going to a community college, helping poor school districts, making sure that families who send their kids to college and take out a student loan, that those loan repayment rates are reasonable. Those are the reforms we made as Democrats here while the Democrats were in charge of the Chamber in 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010, and those are the investments we made.

We're talking about two separate philosophies. One philosophy on the Republican Tea Party side is to cut taxes for the wealthy, deregulate Wall Street, and look the other way while there's a crap game going on on Wall Street; have two wars, one of them very questionable in why it started in the first place, and a prescription drug bill that all went on the credit card.

So cut taxes, start two wars, and put a prescription drug bill on the credit card, drive up the debt, deregulate the financial markets until the taxpayer has to come in and bail out and the economy collapses, that's what happened. And so we don't really have to have the argument. Those are the facts of a Republican Presidency, House, and Senate that got to implement their tax package. They got to implement their financial regulatory packages. They got to pass budgets that did or did not make certain investments. And what happened is, after a decade of that philosophy being implemented, the economy collapsed. It was not just a normal recession, it was a financial recession, which a lot of economists now are telling us how difficult and how much longer it takes to get out of these financial recessions.

So the discussion that we've had in the last Presidential election and the discussion that we want to have here in this Chamber as to what philosophy should prevail in the United States of House of Representatives, the body that is most directly elected—the Federal piece, anyway—most directly elected, every 2 years, by the people of this country, what philosophy shall we take? And the Democrats are offering, under the leadership of Leader PELOSI, a different world view, a world view that says we make investments in the infrastructure, we make investments in education, we make sure that we have a fair Tax Code that is simpler and fairer, that it doesn't take forever to fill out your taxes. Keep it simple. And at the same time, we ask those people who have benefited so much over the last decade or two, whose income went up and they now make 300-plus times what the average worker makes, that they help pay their fair share and help us pay for the debts that the Republican Party has incurred by putting two wars on a credit card and a prescription drug bill.

So that's the discussion. That's what we want to do. And the President and the Democrats have made these investments. And if you think that things like only paying a certain percentage of your income back for your student loan is what is part of your philosophy, then you fall in our camp on that issue. If you think that the CEO that's making 300 times more, or $300 for every dollar the person on the factory floor is making, needs to be balanced out, maybe they need to help us pay down the debt more and shouldn't have all kinds of tax loopholes, then you're going to side with what the Democrats want to do.

So long story short, we are now in a position where we can talk about the Republican budget. And we all are in agreement, I think, Democrats and Republicans, that budgets are documents that represent our values. And we all are in agreement that we need to take care of our long-term debt. We need to reduce our deficits. It is an issue, and one that we all need to take very seriously.

Now, the Republican plan is presented to the American people, and it is taking needed investments and cutting them so deeply that we are going to get leapfrogged by China and India and Europe in some of the coming industries. These cuts, in order to try to balance the budget in a short period of time, are going to be pushed off. The burden of these cuts will be on the middle class—education, economic development, which are the kind of investments that we need to make. Also, these cuts are going to be cut out of programs that help the poorest among us, and that is not a recipe for success.

We have 300-plus million people in the United States. We are competing against India and China on who's going to determine who's going to shape the future of the global economy. Is it going to be the United States? Is it going to be China? Is it going to be India? Is it going to be Europe? That's the question. Who's going to shape this future? And America has always had a recipe, from post-World War II until roughly in the 1980s, where we made investments in infrastructure, we made investments in research and development, we made investments in education, because we knew that those were public investments that would yield huge benefits for the United States of America.

And now we have a Republican philosophy that says those investments are a waste of money and that any investment that the government makes must be a bad one; that the space program, that the research investments that we make, that making sure that school is affordable, the public-private partnerships that lead to new developments, the research that no one company will make must be made by the public. Those are quality investments that help build our economy for a generation, whether it was post-World War II with the GI Bill and we take all of these soldiers and we make sure that they can go to college, we make sure they can go to law school, we make sure that they can go to medical school, we make sure they can become engineers.

□ 1740

Or the space program, in which public money, with private ingenuity and know-how, came together. That investment in the space program led to a booming economy in the high-tech sector, the other public investments that led to the Internet and satellites and all of these other things, and private companies come in and benefit from that and then invest in a workforce that can take those technologies and make them better and increase productivity so that we have a strong middle class.

Invest in our infrastructure, make sure that we rebuild our country. We've got combined sewer systems, we've got roads, we've got bridges that need done. We need to make sure that we invest in the smart power grids so that we can get alternative energy pumped into our grids, so that we can have a more conservative approach to how we expend energy, a smarter approach because of a smart grid where we're wasting less energy. These are the kind of investments that we need to make, and all the while protecting what's happening and what may happen if the Republican budget would be signed into law.

The dramatic cuts in the Medicare program, asking those going into their senior years to not have a guaranteed benefit that they paid into. Many of those folks who would be hurt by the program, the Republican budget program, would be women, many of them older women. Fifty-five percent of the Medicare population—women. The oldest Medicare beneficiaries, 85 and over, 70 percent of those are women. So as we age, women will see those cuts.

We have proposals from the other side about abolishing Planned Parenthood, about saying that Planned Parenthood does not serve women well. It's many, many women who get basic health care from Planned Parenthood—screenings, birth control, family planning, all done through Planned Parenthood. The other side wants to abolish it, defund it completely.

These are some basic things that we need to do in order to protect the middle class.

So here we are, in the next few weeks and months, we're going to have a discussion about where this country goes and where the House of Representatives goes and what's our philosophy. So we will be coming here week after week after week to compare this philosophy, the philosophy of cut taxes for the top 1 percent, to keep the Tax Code very complicated so the wealthiest benefit from it, or Democratic philosophies and Democratic proposals that say we want a fairer Tax Code, we want a simpler Tax Code, and we want a Tax Code that doesn't have so many loopholes that only if you have high-powered accountants will you be able to take advantage of the Tax Code.

The Tax Code should benefit middle class families. We all need to contribute, but it shouldn't be so complicated that if you have a lot of money or you're a big corporation you're somehow going to get out of paying taxes or you're somehow going to be able to hide your taxes overseas and not pay your fair share. That's one group's philosophy versus ours.

We are saying that, yes, we need to balance the budget, but we want to do it like President Clinton did it and the Democrats did it in 1993. We want to do it in a fair way that continues to make investments in those essential investments that will lead to long-term economic growth.

One of the things we're doing in Youngstown, in my congressional district, is a program that President Obama had to put together administratively—that we want to push for more of these—public-private partnerships and innovative institutes. The innovation institute that we have now in Youngstown is in additive manufacturing, three-dimensional printing, the cutting edge of manufacturing, the cutting edge of additive manufacturing, partnering with big companies like Lockheed and Boeing and other smaller companies in the Mahoning Valley. But public money from the Department of Defense or Department of Energy, the Department of Commerce, public-private partnerships to help position America—not just our region—in the next generation of additive manufacturing help drive the cost down for these printers so that everyone that has a desktop computer now can have a desktop printer that prints products that could revolutionize health care, revolutionize energy, revolutionize

manufacturing in the defense industry. But this is a public-private partnership.

What we cannot do is say, ''Oh, my God, that's government money; it's got to be bad,'' these investments that we make for the poor in the Medicaid program so we can make sure that these kids have basic health care in the United States of America.

And, yes, we do need education reform; yes, we do need innovation within the health care system. We've got a long way to go, even with the health care reform bill and how we can revolutionize health care, how we can revolutionize education, how we can revolutionize the way we take care of our veterans. I will be back on this floor talking about some of those ways that we can go about doing that.

But the issue I have with the Republican proposals are they're all about the budget. Listen, we all know we have a demographic problem—we all know we have the baby boomers moving into the Social Security and the Medicare system—but how are we going to drive down Medicare costs? How are we going to drive down health care costs? That's the question. That's what's important. Of course we need to bring the cost down of health care, but you just don't say, well, we're not going to have any reforms, the free market is somehow going to take care of it and it should be pushed off on the backs of the citizens. That's not going to work. That's not humane. There is a better way to go about it, when you look at the field of integrative health care, for example, how you can help prevent a lot of issues from arising that make people sick.

When you look at 70 or 75 percent of health care costs are caused by things that are behavioral in nature, so how do we shift the health care system to even more prevention like we tried to do in the health care reform bill? How do we make investments into areas in medical schools and hospitals that are looking into driving down health care costs in these other ways? Not just talk about, oh, we're going to have draconian cuts to the Medicare program and then we're going to push it all off on the Medicare recipient to foot the bill and we're going to give them a voucher.

Ladies and gentlemen, that is what happens with this Republican Tea Party budget. You will get a voucher, Mr. Speaker. These folks will get a voucher. My friends on the other side say, well, yeah, but that voucher will help you pay for it. The problem is the voucher that the seniors will get doesn't go up, doesn't rise with the cost of health care. So the voucher only goes up a small bit while health care costs have been going up four, five, six, seven, depending on the plan, more percent. So you get a voucher today and it's worth $100 and your health care bill is $150, but next year your voucher is worth $102 and health care costs are $170. That happens every single year. That voucher becomes worthless at some point. The cost will be pushed off onto seniors. They're going to have to come out of pocket. Their kids are going to have to help them.

You see these huge cuts in the Medicaid program, which in many States help senior citizens get into a nursing home and pay for a nursing home.

□ 1750

So the middle class, again, people 40, 50, 60 years old who have parents in a nursing home, are going to have to come out of pocket. That's bad for the economy, less consumer demand.

All of these things fit together. We're going to come back and continue to talk about many of these issues over the course of the next few weeks and months and compare. As I said at the beginning, I've got a lot of Republican friends in this Chamber, I've got a lot of Republican friends in my congressional district, but I also have a lot of Republican friends in my congressional district that would disagree with the approach of the disinvestment in the United States that's coming from the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to coming back in the next week and months, and I'm sure you're excited for that, too.

I yield back the balance of my time.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) for 30 minutes.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address this Chamber and to address an issue of great concern to me. I just heard my colleague and friend from Ohio and what he had to say, and certainly there is a debate that's going on that's worth being had, a debate about the progression of this great country, the greatest on this Earth, in the history of this Earth, a country that has distinguished itself in just a few short years, 236, 237, as a Nation that understands what liberty is about, but also understands the authority that we come under.

Mr. Speaker, I have wrestled with coming to the floor tonight, because since I first began my legislative career back in 1982 in the Michigan House of Representatives, and when I stood in front of people and asked for their opportunity or their support to give me a privileged position in that great body, I stated clearly, and I have from that point in 1982 to this very day, I've stated that, as a Christian and as a former pastor, while I would not flaunt my religion, I would not hide my faith.

I've continued that in coming to the U.S. House of Representatives as well. I truly believe that all laws are moral. Some of us would consider morality one way and others of us would consider it another. We all come through filters in life. I understand that, and I respect that. I believe that the Framers and Founders of this great country, its ideals that were based upon truth as they determined truth to be, as they understood it, truth coming from the revealed word of God that they declared to be found in the Bible at that time, and they were not ashamed to say that and quoted many times from Scripture, even without reference, because it was clearly understood by the citizens of that day that the basic ideals that this new government was established upon were ideals found and written down in the Bible and clearly understood to be the word of God.

I'd wrestle with the fact that I understand that there are filters, and the moment that I let it out of the bag, as it were, Mr. Speaker, that I'm a pastor, I'm a Christian, I come from a Judeo-Christian value system, that that's my filter, that I would lose the opportunity to speak to society in general. Well, I assume that risk this evening, because we have come to a time in our history where the unified understanding, whether we acknowledged it or fully agreed with it or certainly lived by it, because I know, as one who has feet of clay, that though I understand truth, I don't always live by it, yet our country is at crossroads in a battle along those principles.

I read in this greatest man-made document ever penned, the Constitution of the United States, I read the First Amendment, the Second Amendment, the Third Amendment, and on through the Tenth Amendment, which are classified as the Bill of Rights, Bill of Rights that were given and acknowledged by the Framers and Founders and the implementers of these amendments, the Bill of Rights, as really stemming from God, Himself, unalienable rights, God given, not man given, recognizing these rights as above simple human reasoning.

In recent days, I've read and reread our First Amendment that says:

> Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for redress of grievances.

And I go on to the final, the 10th, that gives the States the authority that they should have. And I see what's taking place in relationship at this point in time to one complex bill that was passed, called the Affordable Health Care Act, but with specifically one mandate that I clearly believe runs roughshod of this First Amendment when it, in fact, is a law that prohibits the free exercise thereof of religious beliefs. Now, again, that's my perspective, but it's a perspective I think is backed up by the Framers and Founders in their writings and their speeches and their beliefs that they implemented into this great, great country.

Just recently I read an article that, more than just simply being an article, gave names of fellow citizens,

businesspeople, who through no fault of their own, except for the fact that they were religious, they were people of faith that had firm convictions, convictions that they believed went beyond themselves but went to the God that they honored, people like Chris and Paul Griesedieck—I hope I pronounced that name right. I don't know them personally, but I know they run a 105-year-old company started by their great-grandfather, a company in St. Louis that employs 150 people. They are sincere Christians that believe to be forced to supply health insurance that provides abortifacient coverage, agents that will produce abortions, is against their firmly held Christian beliefs and would be a violation of their responsibility to their God.

Now, that's their morality, that's their filter, but from the inception of this country, believed that that, along with all other religious beliefs, was protected under the Bill of Rights.

They are at a point right now, if they violate the mandate of the law, which they are attempting to get an injunction and attempting ultimately to see themselves covered just like churches and Christian colleges, but if they aren't, they're looking at a $5 million fine under that mandate, annually. They've indicated that that will put them out of business.

There's another company run by David Green—we all know it well—Hobby Lobby. We've seen their ads at Easter and Christmastime, full-page ads that he pays for with his own money, to declare the meaning of Christmas and the meaning of Easter in his faith. He pays for it, longstanding, and yet if he doesn't fall under this mandate and bow the knee to the government and not keep his knees bowed to his God that he serves, he'll pay a $1.3 million per day fine, which will take the 13,000 employees that he employs and potentially put them out of a job, many of whom agree with his personal strong faith.

□ 1800

He said, It's come down to the point that I'm forced to either abandon my beliefs in order to stay in business or abandon my business in order to stay true to my belief. That's not the America that was founded by people who put the Bill of Rights together, and specifically the First Amendment.

I could go on with other illustrations about other business owners. Well, let me point out one business owner here who is doing significant work not only as a very successful 85-year-old insurance executive of an insurance company, but he's taken those resources—like Mr. Green, who has given over $500 million to charitable causes, living out his faith—but this gentleman has done the same thing in reaching out to many needy people and developing a business that impacts peoples' lives who are in difficult circumstances. His name is Charles Sharpe. He is 85 years old. He founded Heartland Ministries with the money that he developed to provide a Christian rehabilitation program for men and women battling drug and alcohol addiction, and a boarding school for troubled youth, with his own money. Yet, if he falls under the mandate, the employees that are employed running this organization, but more importantly the lives that are impacted positively by this ministry, will be impacted and the ministry will go under.

As I said, I could go on and on with other illustrations of how this First Amendment liberty is being violated by a country that made this as the first of the Bill of Rights.

Just recently we all heard, I believe, a concern that a briefing had been given to U.S. Army Reserve recruits which classified Catholics, some Jews, evangelical Christians and Sunni Muslims as religious extremists along with the KKK, Al Qaeda and Hamas. In America, religions strongly held, firmly believed religious beliefs, are being attacked as extremist, along with terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda, Hamas and KKK.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you this is not America. I don't care what the courts have said at this point. They've ruled on a tax. But on a constitutional question, I think it's clear for us who read it to understand it is more than just the document, but to understand it as a warning to us and a reminder that the blessings of the freedom of this great Nation come with a commitment to ideals that are beyond us, that are timeless, that are important, that we often call religion but are beyond that. They are faith that goes to our integrity, our convictions, our character.

John Adams, one of the Founders of our country, John Adams, who defended liberty even when he defended the Red Coats under the same premise that we believe that all people deserve a hearing and a just trial, John Adams, who was willing to give his life, his fortune, his sacred honor, said:

> Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

Why in the world would he say that? There is huge wisdom there, but it came from an understanding that humanity wasn't enough in itself. Human beings weren't wise enough in their own right, but rather had to flow from some truth wiser than that.

Social critic Irving Kristol I think encapsulated it when he said:

> This appears to be a sociological truth. It is religion that reassures people that this world of ours is a home, not just a habitat, and that the tragedies and unfairness we all experience are features of a more benign, if not necessarily comprehensible, whole. It is religion that restrains the self-seeking hedonistic impulse so easily engendered by a successful market economy.

We are a successful market economy here in the United States, and I'm grateful for that, and we need to do a lot of work to continue that. But our faith beliefs—and I'm not talking about one religion over another. I certainly come from a Judeo-Christian viewpoint, and I believe it to be true. I would not have given my life to that belief if it weren't. It impacts society as a whole.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn understood it with his life. He said:

> All individual human rights are granted because man is God's creature; that is, freedom was given to the individual conditionally in the assumption of his constant religious responsibility. Two hundred or even 50 years ago, it would have seemed quite impossible in America that an individual could be granted boundless freedom simply for the satisfaction of his instincts and whims.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that seems to be the point in time where we're at right now, where we're willing for our whims, our instincts, our desires, our own purposes to give in to the baseness of those hedonistic philosophies. And it's proven to be true. The results are there. Here are just a few of them.

Since 1960, we have the end of the so-called ''Christian America,'' as the media has called it in Newsweek. The U.S. illegitimacy rate has rocketed from 5 percent of all births to 41 percent. Among African Americans, the share of births out of wedlock is 71 percent. That's up from 23 percent in 1960. The percentage of households that were married couple families with children under 18 had plummeted by 2006 to just 21.6 percent. Since Roe v. Wade, 50 million-plus abortions have been performed. The Declaration of Independence? We are all endowed with the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Between 1960 and 1990, the teenage suicide rate tripled, though the number then fell. As of 2006, suicide was the third leading cause of death of young adults and adolescents age 15 to 24, just behind homicide.

And I could go on with the tragic results of going away from religious belief, faith belief, truth, a moral character. Again, all laws are moral—right, wrong or indifferent. We all have filters.

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that we are challenged economically, we are challenged socially, we are challenged in our security and we are challenged in our liberty because we have wantonly walked away from or in complacency have given away the underpinnings that allowed God to bless this great country, which is still receiving the results of much of that blessing.

The Founders argued very clearly that ''virtue derived from religion is indispensable to limited government.'' The American model of religious liberty takes a strongly positive view of religious practice, both private and public. Far from privatizing religion, it assumes that religious believers and institutions will take active roles in society, including ministers, including engaging in politics and policymaking and helping form the public's moral

consensus. In fact, the American Founders considered religious engagement in shaping the public morality essential to ordered liberty and the success of their experiment in self-government.

□ 1810

John Witherspoon, a minister who signed the Declaration of Independence, said in talking about our Republic, ''a republic once equally poised must either preserve its virtue or lose its liberty.''

Mr. Speaker, as I began, I will never intend to flaunt my religion, but I will not hide my faith; and I believe, in this country where we've given the greatest amount of freedom to all religious beliefs, we would do well to remember that ourselves—to not hold it back but to encourage faith and to encourage laws that respect that to the fullest degree and say to people like David Green or to the Griesediecks or others: we respect you for what you do, your beliefs, and we will certainly honor your freedom. We will not impinge upon you by mandates, no matter how good the law might seem, because there is something higher than health, physical health—and that's our spiritual health, our character health, in this country.

There is a stone above you, Mr. Speaker, that's there tonight and that has been here since this great Chamber was put together, and it's a quote of Daniel Webster's. I read it often, and it says simply this:

''Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests—'' Daniel Webster could be speaking to us tonight and to our country, Mr. Speaker— ''and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered.''

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that if we would restore liberty and justice for all, if we were to restore the opportunity to live under our spiritual liberties and beliefs and not mandate people to go against that—bow their knees to almighty government as opposed to bowing to Almighty God—this Nation will be a blessed Nation under God, with liberty and justice for all.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity tonight, and I yield back the balance of my time.

RESTORING THE RULE OF LAW AND REESTABLISHING THE PILLARS OF AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As always, it's an honor to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that I come to this floor very troubled here this evening. I am troubled at the current inertia that seems to have been created in the minds and in the positions of a number of people who are here in the House and in the Senate, primarily those on my side of the aisle, who seemed to wake up on the morning of November 7 and decided that Mitt Romney would be President-elect if he just hadn't said two words, ''self-deport,'' and if he hadn't said two other words, ''47 percent.'' They had done this analysis, apparently, before there were any kind of exit polls that could have been considered.

They persist in sticking with this opinion that something must be done about immigration in this country and that there needs to be comprehensive immigration reform passed and that, if that doesn't happen, then there's going to be a kind of calamity that might eliminate or badly weaken the bipartisan, two-party system that we have in this country.

I reject those principles or those opinions, Mr. Speaker, because what I know about the facts refutes them completely. There are no facts that uphold such a position. It is true that the people in my party have lost a growing share of the vote of the list of minority coalitions that there are in the country. It's also true that the other party has demagogued this issue mercilessly, and the effect of their tens of millions of dollars has shown in the polls. My colleagues on my side of the aisle don't seem to recognize that. Perhaps they haven't thought this through, and I hope they do, Mr. Speaker. But the most essential pillar of American exceptionalism that is affected by this debate over immigration is the rule of law.

It appears to me that there are a number of people on my side of the aisle who say—even though they recognize that the comprehensive immigration reform agenda, which has been around since the George W. Bush administration and perhaps before—they believe that somehow, even though it's fifth or sixth on the list of issues that would be important and relevant to minorities that look at the path to citizenship and at a path to staying in the United States and working and raising their families and being productive here, that jobs and the economy are more important. A whole list of things are more important, but it's fifth or sixth on that priority list. Those who advocate for this Gang of Eight's version, which seems to be emerging from the Senate in comprehensive immigration reform, seem to think that we should do something, that we should pass some type of amnesty because that's what's required to ''start the conversation.''

I took an oath to uphold this Constitution. This Constitution is the supreme law of the land, and the rule of law is an essential pillar of American exceptionalism; and if there are people in this Congress, House or Senate, who are prepared to sacrifice the rule of law in order to start a conversation, that's enough to get me to come here to the floor tonight, Mr. Speaker, to start the conversation about restoring the rule of law and reestablishing the pillars of American exceptionalism and making sure that this great Nation that we are can go on to our destiny beyond the shining city on the hill to a place that actually does realize American destiny with all of the pillars of American exceptionalism intact, not sacrificing the rule of law for political expediency, which is the bargain that is being negotiated over on the Senate side and behind closed doors here on the House side, although not even publicly admitted to.

So, Mr. Speaker, in the earlier part of this discussion, I would be very pleased to yield to a very strong leader on the rule of law, to one who has led within his own community in Hazleton and who has been a clear and articulate voice on protecting and defending America's rule of law destiny, and that's the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA).

Mr. BARLETTA. Thank you, Congressman KING.

Recently, there has been a lot of talk in Washington about illegal immigration. As the mayor of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, after it was estimated that 10 percent of our entire population was there illegally, I created the first law of its kind in the country. Now, I don't need to be briefed about illegal immigration—I have lived it. Because Washington has failed to protect our borders, cities like mine have been overcome. I had to deal with it myself because of Washington's failure.

Our immigration laws were created for two reasons: one, to protect the American people and our national security; and two, to protect American workers.

Now, in 1986, Ronald Reagan had promised the American people that if we'd give amnesty to 1.5 million illegal aliens that we would secure our borders and that this would never happen again. After the declaration of amnesty, that 1.5 million actually doubled to over 3 million. Now, a quarter of a century later, over 11 million people are in our country illegally, and our borders are still not secured.

This isn't just about the southern border. There is a lot of focus about, if we secure the southern border, our borders are secure. Forty percent of the people who are in the country illegally did not cross a border—they didn't cross the southern border; they didn't come across Canada. Forty percent of the people who are in the country illegally came on visas and overstayed their visas. In fact, one of the men who was granted amnesty in 1986 was involved in the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center. Now, my city is 2,000 miles away from the nearest southern border, and I have an illegal immigration problem. Any State that has an international airport is a border State.

□ 1820

There are 22 million Americans who are out of work. We should not be encouraging millions more to come here illegally when so many Americans cannot find jobs. Medicare and Social Security are going broke, and yet the Heritage Foundation did a study that said that if we give a pathway to citizenship to the 11 million or more who are here, it will cost over $2.6 trillion over the next 20 years. We should not even be talking about offering amnesty. There should be no bill that talks about a pathway to citizenship. We should be securing our borders first.

This is something that we should all be able to agree upon, Democrats and Republicans, the Senate and the House, if we are sincere, if we're not trying to fool the American people a second time. We promised them that we would secure our borders before we give amnesty. Offering a pathway to citizenship will make matters worse. It will encourage millions more to come here illegally.

You know, you don't replace your carpet at home when you still have a hole in the roof.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for coming to the floor to deliver this presentation, this hands-on presentation from the gentleman, Mr. BARLETTA. If you would yield to a question, I'm curious as to the percentage of the population of Hazleton that is a minority population, perhaps Hispanic population, and how your election results turned out the last time you ran for mayor of Hazleton?

Mr. BARLETTA. Sure. When I was mayor of Hazleton, over 40 percent of the entire population of Hazleton was Hispanic, and I won with over 90 percent of the vote. And I don't know of anyone at the time who took a harder stance against illegal immigration than I had at that time. So this talk that you cannot stand up for the rule of law, that you cannot stand up against illegal immigration and still welcome new immigrants, new American citizens, is totally false.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, just doing a quick calculation off of that, 40 percent of the population of Hazleton being Hispanic, presuming that represented a percentage of the voting population that was Hispanic, and you carried 90 percent of the vote, which would indicate that somewhere in the area of 75 percent of the Hispanic population voted for LOU BARLETTA for mayor of Hazleton; would that be close to correct?

Mr. BARLETTA. I believe it would. And again, what I found in my hands-on experience as a mayor in dealing with the problem of illegal immigration, plus a city whose Hispanic population had exploded, for example, to show you how fast our population had grown, in the year 2000, English as a Second Language, the budget for English as a Second Language was $500. Just 5 years later, it was $1.5 million. So as our immigrant population grew, we also realized that the most important issues to those that were there were good opportunities, were good jobs. It wasn't about granting amnesty or a pathway to citizenship. They wanted good jobs and a good education for their children. They came to America for that better life. Offering amnesty wasn't going to make their life any better, and they understood that. They also understand that allowing 20 or 30 million more people to come into this country illegally is not helpful for people who are starting out, who need the jobs that they came here for, or many Americans who can't find work.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I'm curious, since you came to Congress here, Mr. BARLETTA, and I'm going to presuppose that you have strong personal relationships among the entire spectrum of the community of Hazleton, have any of them in any appreciable number changed their position on the immigration issue since they sent you to Congress? And can you speak on some of your relationships with your constituents today and those who were your constituents when you were mayor?

Mr. BARLETTA. The position has not changed. And, in fact, I believe the fact that I stood up for the rule of law and I speak for the importance of protecting our national security and our American jobs here, it has allowed me to win elections, getting both Democrat and Republican support. I ran in a district that was 2:1 Democrat, and I won by over 10 percent of the vote. I really believe the fact that I was able to stand up when Washington had let us down was really the reason why Democrats, Republicans, immigrants, and non-immigrants supported me.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, the individuals that come here to this Congress from various districts, and surely there are many that come from blue collar-type districts—I'm going to presume that's a fair amount of the Democrat constituency that you represent, me being a blue collar kind of a guy and a hands-on fellow—I started out as an earth-moving contractor, actually in the labor part of the construction business—how do you suppose the constituents of other Members of Congress that don't have this same position that you have on the rule of law and immigration and protecting legal immigrants, what are they hearing do you suppose in those similar districts to the one you have?

Mr. BARLETTA. I believe that people all over the country understand what I'm saying, that illegal immigration is crushing our cities. Our population in Hazleton grew by 50 percent, but our tax revenue remained the same. Our population grew by 50 percent, but our tax revenue remained the same. Small cities, small towns like Hazleton, Pennsylvania, are crushed by the burden of illegal immigration.

I was sued for creating the first law of its kind in the country, and I couldn't find politicians to come near me, to be honest with you. It was pretty refreshing because nobody came to Hazleton. And I thought I was standing there alone until I started getting cards and letters and checks from people all over the United States. In fact, I got checks from every State, including Alaska and Hawaii, to help defend our city in that lawsuit. We raised over half a million dollars, most of it in $10 and $20 donations, from people all over America who felt the same way. I am not alone. The American people understand what illegal immigration means. It doesn't mean that we roll up the welcome mat to new immigrants. We ask them to come here through the proper channels, respect the rule of law, and then give them the opportunity that they came to America for.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I remain curious to the wealth of experience that the former mayor and the gentleman from Pennsylvania has provided here, Mr. Speaker. I would ask also, of the illegal drug distribution links that exist in this country and that which I'm going to presume also shows up in Hazleton, illegal drugs and violence, and I will make this statement into the RECORD, Mr. Speaker, and that is, in my meetings with the Drug Enforcement Agency and a number of others that are involved in enforcing the laws against illegal drugs, they tell me that at least one link in every illegal drug distribution chain in America, at least one link in that chain, is carried out by someone who is unlawfully present in the United States. The cost of those illegal drugs to our society, I don't know has been quantified. That trade itself has been estimated to be something above $40 billion, perhaps something above $60 billion a year, and I would ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania if his experience would reflect that to be true?

Mr. BARLETTA. Well, it is absolutely true. I'll give you an example. We had arrested a young man for selling cocaine on a playground. The man was in the country illegally. It took our detectives 5 hours to determine who he was. He had five Social Security cards. He had five identities. Law enforcement has no idea who they are dealing with; many, many are here under fraudulent documentation. Those who are involved in the criminal element, in the gangs or drug trade, I don't believe will be coming forward no matter what laws we pass here. And we can pass all the laws in the world; if we don't enforce the laws of this country and if we don't allow States and local law enforcement to work in harmony with the Federal Government, we will never stop the problem of illegal immigration. But what we shouldn't do is make the same mistake we made in 1986 and give a green light to people all over the world to come here illegally while our borders are still open.

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If you were a family waiting to come to the United States because you wanted to obey the law, but you hear a declaration like we're hearing here in Washington, offering a pathway to citizenship and protection while you're here, why would you wait? Why would you wait with your family?

It would be a green light for people to come. That's why the problem will become worse.

Mr. KING of Iowa. And reclaiming my time, it was reported to me today here on the floor, a Representative that represents an area very near the southern border said to me that the illegal border crossings are up 20 percent since the dialog on comprehensive immigration reform, that euphemism began.

So the encouragement for people to get into the United States on the chance that this Congress will pass some kind of an act that would ultimately be amnesty is bringing more people into the United States.

But I wanted to circle back and ask another question of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, and that is that there's a GAO study, a General Accountability Office study, of about 2 years ago that went back through our prison system and asked the question, a number of questions about the population of our prison system that are criminal aliens. And that number was at least 28 percent. Some numbers show 30, depending on how you define that.

But there also was a number in there that was stark to me. The people in prisons in the United States, both Federal and State, all together, who have been convicted of homicide, now that prison population, according to that study, was 25,064. And when I think of a number that large, multiples of all of our casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan, that is American population, most of it, that's a number, but it's human. It's very, very personal.

And I would ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania if he would have any personal accounts that might reflect a component of that 25,064.

Mr. BARLETTA. Well I did, actually. The final straw for me that made me realize that I needed to do something to protect the people in my town actually happened on May 10, 2006. It was a day that I'll never forget.

Earlier in the day we had arrested a 14-year-old for shooting a gun into a crowded playground. The 14-year-old was in the country illegally. And it was interesting: he had his lawyer on speed dial on his cell phone, which I thought I don't know how many 14-year-olds carry their lawyer on a speed dial.

I remember going home that day and telling my wife that I had—I didn't know what to do anymore. We were losing control of the city. We didn't have the resources to deal with the problem.

That same night I got a call from the chief of police, 1 o'clock in the morning, a 29-year-old city man, father of three children, was shot in the head. He was shot by one of the gang members in the city.

That one homicide, it took our police department 36 hours to bring the people forward that committed that crime. We spent half of our yearly budget in overtime in the police department on that one murder.

And enough was enough. If the Federal Government wasn't going to do anything, then I had to. I took an oath, and I had an obligation to do so. And that's what began my crusade.

I was sued, by the way. I was sued for creating the law. In fact, the plaintiffs that sued the city of Hazelton, many of the plaintiffs were admitted illegal aliens who sued the city. They had their identities kept confidential. They had asked if their identities could be kept confidential, which they were. We were not allowed to ask their names.

They then asked if they could be excused from showing up at the trial because they were in the country illegally and didn't want to go to a Federal courthouse. It was granted.

I never saw our accusers. I took the stand for 2 days. I testified for 2 days, but never saw the people that sued the city of Hazelton. I felt that illegal aliens were given more rights than a United States citizen would be given. You cannot sue your city and remain anonymous.

I vowed to appeal this and fight this to the Supreme Court, which we did.

So what brings me here is a life of experience as a mayor who tries to balance a budget, provide a good quality of life for the people that live there, and realize what happens when illegal immigration, not at the border, not just at the border, not just in Texas. I'm 2,000 miles away from that southern border.

We have good reason to enforce our immigration laws, and we should not be encouraging people to come to this country illegally by granting amnesty. We did it in 1986, and we're talking about this again.

Why obey our immigration laws if we have an administration that won't enforce the laws and a Congress that wants to give amnesty every time the problem comes up again?

We need to enforce our laws. We need to make E-verify mandatory. Protect American jobs. We need to make sure we're protecting our national security. There are people around the world that want to harm us.

And we need to give the immigrants that come here the opportunity that they waited for, those immigrants that stood and waited because they wanted to obey America's laws and they are here, and we are stealing that opportunity away from them. Yet we're telling them we're doing this for the immigrants that are here.

They're smarter than that. And that's why immigration is not the most important issue to the people that are here. They want that education; let's give it to them.

All the programs that the Heritage Foundation talks about that will be impacted by this pathway to citizenship are programs that the most needy need to live. Why are we going to hurt people that need these programs?

I feel very strongly about this issue. I feel very strongly, and that's why I'm here to speak up.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I very much thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for coming to the floor and voicing his opinion. And I know that he's also occupied with a very tight schedule, so I appreciate that a great deal.

Mr. Speaker, the attention that I've given Mr. BARLETTA, I hope that you and America have given LOU BARLETTA as well. And I hope that he's rewarded, not only by his constituents, but by a policy of protection of the rule of law that can be re-established here in this country.

The idea that we should somehow suspend our good judgment, and we should waive the rule of law, all for some idea of political expediency, is not compatible with the principles of our political party. And sacrificing the rule of law for political expediency seems, to me, to be a foolish idea.

It needs to be precious to be an American citizen. Citizenship should be valuable. And throughout all of the years that people have come into the United States legally—and the distinction between legal and illegal has been conflated by the open-borders crowd, both Republicans and Democrats.

But you'll watch, Mr. Speaker, how they conflate the language. A few years ago they started blending the term ''health care'' and ''health insurance'' till it became one thing, and we got ObamaCare out of that, because people could no longer draw the distinction between health care and health insurance.

And we've also watched during a similar period of time, as the dialog of the distinction between illegal immigrant and immigrant, the distinction—immigrant means someone who came to the United States legally and followed our laws, that saw the image of the Statue of Liberty, was inspired by that image, and found a way to come to America to exercise all the God-given liberties that are here, that were defined so well in our Declaration of Independence and protected in our Constitution. That's ''immigrant.''

That's where the vigor comes from, for the American population and civilization, among our brothers. It's God-given liberty, but it's also the vigor of those who were inspired to come to America.

So, Mr. Speaker, I recognize there are only about 3 minutes left, but I'd be very happy to yield to the gentleman from Texas, who is very reliable and a very clear voice, as much time as there may remain.

Mr. GOHMERT. Well, thank you. And I'll just take a moment because what you're talking about is so very critical.

And just to reiterate the point that's been coming out in a couple of hearings, I was shocked that 34.9 percent of all prosecutions by this administration were not for drugs; they were for people reentering this country after they've been deported.

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They're prosecuting people for illegal entries. You don't even prosecute—this administration—people that just come across one time. And when you think about all the detention, all the prison, the jail space, the prosecutors. We pay for the defense attorneys. You think about all of the prisons around America which contain so many people who came in illegally, when this administration says it cannot afford to secure the border, then they have not taken stock of how much money that this country is having to spend on prisons, prosecutors, jails, defense attorneys, all of the costs that come with that, because they're not doing their job.

And I know it goes back to the Bush administration. That is not a defense. And they need to take care of their job—and I hope and pray they will—instead of using the issue of a secure border as ransom. No, we will only secure the border if you will give us amnesty so people can vote for Democrats. That is outrageous. And Jay Leno had it right.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time and thanking the gentleman from Texas, I add up those numbers and it looks like a number approaching 60 percent of the resources used by the Federal Government to prosecute have to do with something coming cross the border, whether it's people, or it's 90 percent of the illegal drugs consumed in America is the other component of that presentation. So if we control this border, Mr. Speaker, we can control the 34.9 percent of the prosecutions about reentry. We have roughly a quarter of that prosecution that has to do with illegal drugs. And the Drug Enforcement Agency does tell us that between 80 and 90 percent of the illegal drugs consumed in America come from or through Mexico.

If there's a universal position on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, it has to do with secure the border, prove you secured the border, establish that, reestablish respect for the rule of law. At that point, we can have a conversation about some of the ideas that are emerging over on the Senate side and in the secret meetings here in the House of Representatives.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 42 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, April 11, 2013, 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:

999. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Castor Oil, Polymer with Adipic Acid, Linoleic Acid, Oleic Acid and Ricinoleic Acid Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP–2013–0057; FRL–9381–2] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1000. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting authorization of Brigadier General Thomas W. Bergeson and Colonel David B. Been, United States Air Force, to wear the authorized insignia of the major general and brigadier general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1001. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of State, transmitting the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) Annual Materials Plan (AMP) for Fiscal Year 2014, along with proposed plans for FY 2015 through 2018, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 98h-2(b); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1002. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Department's final rule—Adequacy of Oregon Municipal Solid Waste Landfil Permit Program [EPA–R10–RCRA–2013–0105; FRL–9796–6] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1003. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Ohio; Ohio Ambient Air Quality Standards; Correction [EPA-R05–OAR–2009–0807; FRL–9783–6] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1004. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Determinations of Attainment of the 1997 8–Hour Ozone Standard for the Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley Moderate Nonattainment Area [EPA-R03–OAR–2012–0409; FRL–9797–8] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1005. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets for the Pennsylvania Counties in the Philadelphia-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE 1997 Fine Particulate Matter Nonattainment Area [EPA-R03–OAR–2012–0954; FRL–9796–3] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1006. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Florida; Prong 3 of Section 110(a)(2)(D)(i) Infrastructrue Requirement for the 1997 and 2006 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R04–OAR–2012–0814; FRL–9797–4] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1007. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Idaho: Sandpoint PM 10 Nonattainment Area Limited Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request [Docket No: EPA-R10–OAR–2012–0017; FRL–9796–5] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1008. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; South Carolina: New Source Review-Prevention of Significant Deterioration [EPA-R04–OAR–2012–0837; FRL–9797–1] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1009. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Delegation of National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for the States of Kentucky and Louisiana, Correcting Amendments [EPA-R06–OAR–2006–0851; FRL–9796–8] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1010. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule: Revision to Best Available Monitoring Method Request Submission Deadline for Petroleum and Natural Gas Systems Source Category (Withdrawal of Direct Final Rule) [EPA-HQ-OAR–2011–0417; FRL–9796–9] received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1011. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: Adjustments to the Allowance System for Controlling HCFC Production, Import, and Export [EPA-HQ-OAR–2011–3454; FRL–9797–5] (RIN: 2060–AQ98) received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1012. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Reconsideration of Certain New Source Issues: National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants from Coal- and Oil-fired Electric Utility Steam Generating Units and Standards of Performance for Fossil-Fuel-Fired Electric Utility, Industrial-Commercial-Institutional, and Small Industrial-Commercial-Institutional Steam Generating Units [EPA-HQ-OAR–2009–0234; EPA-HQ-OAR–2011–0044; FRL–9789–5] (RIN: 2060–AR62) received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1013. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 13–0A, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1014. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting report on Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs in Russia; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1015. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report pursuant to Section 804 of the PLO Commitments Compliance Act of 1989 (title VIII, Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY 1990 and 1991 (Pub. L. 101–246)), and Sections 603–604 (Middle East Peace Commitments Act of 2002)

and 699 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY 2003 (Pub. L. 107–228), the functions of which have been delegated to the Department of State; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1016. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Senate's Resolution of Advice and Consent to the Treaty with the United Kingdom Concerning Defense Trade Cooperation (Treaty Doc. 110–07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1017. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's annual report prepared in accordance with section 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Pub. L. No. 107–174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1018. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics and Regulations, Department of the Treasury, transmitting five reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1019. A letter from the General Counsel, Government Accountability Office, transmitting the Office's annual 2012 report of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation (No FEAR) Act of 2002; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1020. A letter from the Director, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, National Archives, transmitting a copy of the Administration's Fiscal Year 2012 Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation (No FEAR) Act Annual Report; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1021. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, ''Audit of the Fraud Prevention Fund''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1022. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Regulatory Affairs & Collaborative Action, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule—Residential, Business, and Wind and Solar Resource Leases on Indian Land (RIN: 1076–AE73) received March 28, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1023. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the annual report entitled, ''Prioritizing Resources and Organization for Intellectual Property Act of 2012'' for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

1024. A letter from the Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Fiscal Year 2012 Report to the Congress on U.S. Government Receivables and Debt Collection Activities of Federal Agencies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

1025. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting a Report on Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Aviation Consumer Protection as Required by Public Law 112–95, Section 411; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1026. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Diamond Aircraft Industries GmbH Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA–2013–0247; Directorate Identifier 2013–CE–001–AD; Amendment 39–17397; AD 2013–06–02] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 26, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1027. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA–2013–0210; Directorate Identifier 2012–NM–053–AD] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 26, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1028. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Water Quality Standards; Withdrawal of Certain Federal Water Quality Critera Applicable to California, New Jersey and Puerto Rico [EPA-HQ-OW–2012–0095; FRL–9795–8] (RIN: 2040–AF33) received April 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Ms. FOXX: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 146. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1120) to prohibit the National Labor Relations Board from taking any action that requires a quorum of the members of the Board until such time as Board constituting a quorum shall have been confirmed by the Senate, the Supreme Court issues a decision on the constitutionality of the appointments to the Board made in January 2012, or the adjournment sine die of the first session of the 113th Congress. (Rept. 113–32). Referred to the House Calendar.

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. CLEAVER (for himself and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri):

H.R. 1454. A bill to make supplemental agricultural disaster assistance available for fiscal years 2012 and 2013, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi (for himself, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. RICHMOND):

H.R. 1455. A bill to prohibit subsidiaries of foreign owned corporations from obtaining contracts for the performance of passenger and baggage security screening at domestic commercial airports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. COLE (for himself, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. LONG, and Mr. LATTA):

H.R. 1456. A bill to make improvements to the Children's Gasoline Burn Prevention Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD:

H.R. 1457. A bill to provide that certain establishments of the Federal Government shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations budget plans that reflect a 5 percent reduction from the amount proposed for such an establishment in the President's budget submission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. GARRETT (for himself, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. RUNYAN, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. LANCE, Mr. SIRES, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. HOLT):

H.R. 1458. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1 Walter Hammond Place in Waldwick, New Jersey, as the ''Staff Sergeant Joseph D'Augustine Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. PEARCE, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. STEWART):

H.R. 1459. A bill to ensure that the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 applies to the declaration of national monuments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. LONG):

H.R. 1460. A bill to direct the Chief of the Army Corps of Engineers to revise certain authorized purposes described in the Missouri River Mainstem Reservoir System Master Water Control Manual; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. FLORES, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. NUNES, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. WEBER of Texas):

H.R. 1461. A bill to repeal the renewable fuel program of the Environmental Protection Agency; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. COSTA, Mr. WELCH, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. HURT, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LONG, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PITTS, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. YOHO):

H.R. 1462. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to eliminate certain requirements under the renewable fuel program, to prohibit the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from approving the introduction into commerce of gasoline that contains greater than 10-volume-percent ethanol, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. ENYART):

H.R. 1463. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve the mental health assessments provided to members of the Armed Forces deployed in support of a contingency operation; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. BUCSHON, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 1464. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide notice to members of the Armed Forces, beginning with recruit basic training and the initial training of officer candidates, regarding the availability of mental health services, to help eliminate perceived stigma associated with seeking and receiving mental health services, and to clarify the extent to which information regarding a member seeking and receiving mental health services may be disclosed; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GIBSON (for himself and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 1465. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an energy investment credit for energy storage property

connected to the grid, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. LEE of California:

H.R. 1466. A bill to establish the Social Work Reinvestment Commission to provide independent counsel to Congress and the Secretary of Health and Human Services on policy issues associated with recruitment, retention, research, and reinvestment in the profession of social work, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BARBER:

H.R. 1467. A bill to reduce the annual rates of pay of Members of Congress by 20 percent and prohibit further adjustments to such rates; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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 Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 1468. A bill to improve information security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, the Judiciary, Armed Services, Intelligence (Permanent Select), and Energy and Commerce, 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. BURGESS:

H.R. 1469. A bill to repeal certain amendments to the Clean Air Act relating to the expansion of the renewable fuel program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. CAPPS:

H.R. 1470. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to enhance the safety of America's schools; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COURTNEY (for himself, Mr. NEAL, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 1471. A bill to designate the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor as ''The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor''; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GINGREY of Georgia (for himself, Mr. HARPER, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. TERRY, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. LANCE):

H.R. 1472. A bill to restore the longstanding partnership between States and the Federal Government in managing the Medicaid program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GINGREY of Georgia (for himself and Mr. CUELLAR):

H.R. 1473. A bill to prevent certain Federal health care laws from establishing health care provider standards of care in medical malpractice cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. ISRAEL:

H.R. 1474. A bill to reauthorize the ban on undetectable firearms, and to extend the ban to undetectable firearm receivers and undetectable ammunition magazines; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. JENKINS:

H.R. 1475. A bill to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to provide for supplemental estimates of certain revenue bills or joint resolutions that incorporates the macroeconomic effects of that measure; to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 1476. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow penalty-free withdrawals from individual retirement plans for adoption expenses; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIMM, and Mr. PIERLUISI):

H.R. 1477. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to educational organizations to carry out educational programs about the Holocaust; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. NORTON (for herself, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Ms. DELBENE):

H.R. 1478. A bill to amend part C of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to include the pay of Members of Congress within the coverage of the provisions of such Act which provide for budget enforcement through sequestration; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself and Mr. MATHESON):

H.R. 1479. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove the deduction for charitable contributions from the overall limitation on itemized deductions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. SHEA-PORTER:

H.R. 1480. A bill to amend chapter 83 of title 41, United States Code (commonly known as the Buy American Act), to require each department or independent establishment to conduct an annual audit of its contracts for compliance with such chapter, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. SHUSTER (for himself, Mr. TURNER, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. COFFMAN):

H.R. 1481. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to reprogram amounts appropriated for fiscal year 2013 for the Department of Defense for the Medium Extended Air Defense System; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WOMACK (for himself, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. CRAWFORD, and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas):

H.R. 1482. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act to eliminate certain requirements under the renewable fuel program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself and Mr. ANDREWS):

H. Con. Res. 29. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the United States should resume normal diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. RADEL (for himself, Ms. MENG, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. SCHNEIDER):

H. Con. Res. 30. Concurrent resolution recognizing the 65th anniversary of the independence of the State of Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. SHEA-PORTER (for herself and Ms. PINGREE of Maine):

H. Res. 145. A resolution recognizing the 50th anniversary of the sinking of U.S.S. Thresher (SSN 593); to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. JONES, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. HOLT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, Mr. PITTS, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. LATTA, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. OLSON, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. LONG, and Mr. WOLF):

H. Res. 147. A resolution calling for the release of United States citizen Saeed Abedini and condemning the Government of Iran for its persecution of religious minorities; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. LEE of California (for herself, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. WATERS, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. LEWIS, and Mr. CICILLINE):

H. Res. 148. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

H. Res. 149. A resolution expressing support for designation of April as Parkinson's Awareness Month; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RADEL:

H. Res. 150. A resolution congratulating the Florida Gulf Coast University Eagles for becoming the first 15 seed to advance to the ''Sweet 16'' 4th Round in the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

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. CLEAVER:

H.R. 1454.

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. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 1455.

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

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. COLE:

H.R. 1456.

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 5 which allows Congress to ''fix the

Standard of Weights and Measures.'' This legislation would set the standards of portable fuel containers.

Additionally, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 allows Congress to ''regulate Commerce . . . among the several states.'' As portable fuel containers are objects of interstate commerce, it is appropriate for Federal standards to be set.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD:

H.R. 1457.

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

Article I, 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 Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 1458.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 (''To establish Post Offices and post Roads'') and Article I, 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 thereon.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 1459.

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

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 1460.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

''Congress shall have the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian Tribes''

The management of the Missouri river by the Army Corps of Engineers directly impacts commerce. The river is a source of barge traffic carrying a variety of goods.

By Mr. GOODLATTE:

H.R. 1461.

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

Article I, Section 8, clause 3. Because the federal government has stretched Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the commerce clause) beyond its intended boundaries, it follows that efforts to rein in excessive federal government encroachment in this area can be justified by Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. GOODLATTE:

H.R. 1462.

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

Article I, Section 8, clause 3. Because the federal government has stretched Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the commerce clause) beyond its intended boundaries, it follows that efforts to rein in excessive federal government encroachment in this area can be justified by Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.''

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana:

H.R. 1463.

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

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, clauses 12, 13, 14, and 16, which grants Congress the power to raise and support an Army; to provide and maintain a Navy; to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces; and to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana:

H.R. 1464.

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

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, clauses 12, 13, 14, and 16, which grants Congress the power to raise and support an Army; to provide and maintain a Navy; to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces; and to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia.

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 1465.

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

Article 1, Section 8, clause 1.

By Ms. LEE of California:

H.R. 1466.

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 of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. BARBER:

H.R. 1467.

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

Congress is required by Article I, Section 6, of the Constitution to determine its own pay.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 1468.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

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 Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 1469.

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

The attached legislation falls under Congress' enumerated constitutional authority to regulate interstate commerce pursuant to Article I, Section 8, clause 3.

By Mrs. CAPPS:

H.R. 1470.

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

The Constitutional authority in which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to regulate Commerce, as enumerated by Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COURTNEY:

H.R. 1471.

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

Article I, section 8, Clause 1 and Article IV, section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States grant Congress the authority to enact this bill.

By Mr. GINGREY of Georgia:

H.R. 1472.

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

The constitutional authority on which this legislation is based is found in Article I Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution which grants Congress the power to provide for the general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. GINGREY of Georgia:

H.R. 1473.

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

Under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, Congress has power ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers'' when the need exists to clarify existing law.

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 1474.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the powers granted to the Congress by Article I. Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. JENKINS:

H.R. 1475.

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

Article I, Section 8:

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, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. KING of New York:

H.R. 1476.

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 Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 1477.

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

Spending Authorization

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power * * * To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 1478.

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

clause 1 of section 6 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 1479.

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 Ms. SHEA-PORTER:

H.R. 1480.

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

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. SHUSTER:

H.R. 1481.

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

Clause 3 of section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. WOMACK:

H.R. 1482.

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

Article One, Section Eight of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 3: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 24: Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. SALMON, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 79: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.
H.R. 139: Ms. KUSTER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. NOLAN, and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 147: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H.R. 164: Mr. DAINES and Mr. MCHENRY.
H.R. 176: Mr. ALEXANDER and Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 180: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 182: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. HANABUSA.
H.R. 184: Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 197: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CONYERS, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 198: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 207: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 262: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 274: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 303: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. MASSIE
H.R. 311: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 411: Mr. DAINES.
H.R. 421: Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 435: Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin.
H.R. 447: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia and Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 450: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 485: Mr. FARR and Mr. HORSFORD.
H.R. 503: Mr. TIBERI and Mr. BRIDENSTINE.
H.R. 508: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 517: Ms. CLARKE.
H.R. 519: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 523: Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mrs. ROBY, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 543: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 544: Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 556: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. FLEMING.
H.R. 559: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 565: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 574: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 580: Mr. SALMON.
H.R. 597: Ms. NORTON and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 627: Mr. LAMBORN and Mr. HURT.
H.R. 630: Mr. PALLONE, Mr. NEAL, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 633: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia and Mr. PETERS of California.
H.R. 647: Mr. POCAN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. CULBERSON, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. HALL, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. TURNER, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. COLE, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 655: Mr. TURNER.
H.R. 656: Mr. TURNER.
H.R. 659: Mr. TIBERI and Mrs. LUMMIS.
H.R. 661: Mr. POCAN and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 669: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 675: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 679: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. TAKANO, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. KEATING, Mr. WOMACK, Ms. BROWN, of Florida and Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 684: Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. FOSTER, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 705: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 714: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 724: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. POCAN, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. TERRY, and Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 725: Mr. FARR and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 728: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 732: Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. KINGSTON, and Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 742: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 755: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 783: Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 784: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 786: Mr. HOLT, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. MORAN.
H.R. 792: Mr. COBLE and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 794: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 808: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 812: Mr. PERLMUTTER and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 828: Mr. PERRY, Mr. HALL, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. PITTS, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. YOHO, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. MESSER, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 845: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 850: Mr. KILMER, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 853: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 863: Mrs. NAPOLITANO and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 864: Mr. COBLE and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 868: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 880: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 918: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
H.R. 935: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. JONES, Mr. HUELSKAMP, MR. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. YODER, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. FORBES, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. BONNER, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. MARINO, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. HUDSON, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. ENYART, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.R. 940: Mr. ROKITA, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, and Mr. COLE.
H.R. 946: Mr. TIPTON, Mrs. ROBY, and Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 949: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 958: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 960: Mr. GIBSON and Mr. RUNYAN.
H.R. 961: Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. HAHN, Mr. SIRES, Mr. ENYART, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 973: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. KINGSTON, and Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin.
H.R. 974: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
H.R. 975: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. POCAN, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. RUSH, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. CICILLINE, and Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 997: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 1007: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 1008: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Mr. FARR, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. SCHOCK.
H.R. 1014: Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PERRY, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. HARPER.
H.R. 1020: Mr. LATTA and Mr. GARDNER.
H.R. 1025: Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 1026: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. WALZ, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 1028: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 1029: Ms. MCCOLLUM and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 1030: Mr. MCGOVERN and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 1078: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 1081: Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 1087: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. MORAN.
H.R. 1090: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 1097: Mr. FLEMING.
H.R. 1122: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. JORDAN.
H.R. 1124: Ms. CLARKE, Ms. FUDGE, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 1146: Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 1148: Mr. SCHOCK.
H.R. 1150: Ms. DELAURO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. Rangel, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. HOLT, Ms. MOORE, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. CLARKE, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. HIMES, Mr. MORAN, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 1151: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. HOLDING, and Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 1155: Mr. HURT and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 1179: Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 1187: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 1205: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H.R. 1243: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 1250: Mr. YODER, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. HARRIS, MR. ROYCE, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Mr. COTTON.
H.R. 1288: Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. POSEY, Mr. RYAN, of Ohio and Mr. WOLF.
H.R. 1304: Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 1314: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 1331: Mr. LONG and Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 1333: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Ms. CHU.
H.R. 1340: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 1389: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 1406: Ms. FOXX, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. MESSER, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. BONNER, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. BUCSHON, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. ROSKAM, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. GOWDY, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. COBLE, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. BACHUS, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. FORBES, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. REED, Mr. NUGENT, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CAMP, Mr. CARTER, Mr. CULBERSON, and Ms. GRANGER.
H.R. 1420: Mr. PETERS of California.
H.R. 1433: Mr. ELLISON, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. ENYART, and Mr. MCINTYRE.
H.R. 1449: Mr. GERLACH.
H.J. Res. 31: Mr. COHEN.
H. Con. Res. 17: Mr. RANGEL.
H. Con. Res. 23: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. MASSIE, and Mr. PITTS.
H. Con. Res. 26: Mr. NUNNELEE.
H. Res. 19: Mr. PETERS of California.
H. Res. 24: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H. Res. 36: Mr. GOWDY, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. DAINES, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. GRIMM, and Mr. PEARCE.
H. Res. 69: Mr. SCHIFF and Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H. Res. 89: Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. HALL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COOK, Ms. CHU, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, and Mr. SIRES.
H. Res. 90: Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Ms. TITUS, Mrs.

MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. POCAN, Ms. BASS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. CHU, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. CONNOLLY.

H. Res. 94: Ms. CLARKE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H. Res. 95: Mr. SALMON.

H. Res. 108: Mr. MORAN.

H. Res. 109: Mr. ROSKAM.

H. Res. 112: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. GOSAR.

H. Res. 134: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. LONG, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. ENYART, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. COBLE.

H. Res. 135: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. MORAN, and Ms. LEE of California.

H. Res. 136: Mr. PALLONE, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. TSONGAS.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 1175: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2013 No. 47

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable WILLIAM M. COWAN, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, take from us anything that doesn't honor You. Remove covetousness, pride, anger, or anything that is unlike You. Replace our negatives with positives, making us lowly, peaceable, patient, and kind.

Lord, fill our lawmakers with faith, a firm hope, and a charity, that they love nothing that displeases You. Raise them up to be seated with You in heavenly realms, as they strive to be instruments of Your purposes.

Thank You for being rich in mercy and for Your grace that never gives up on us.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable WILLIAM M. COWAN 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. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 10, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable WILLIAM M. COWAN, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COWAN 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, following leader remarks the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to the gun safety legislation. The first hour will be equally divided with the Republicans. They will control the first half, and we will control the final half. Last evening I filed cloture on a motion to proceed to that legislation. Hopefully, today we can reach an agreement to begin debate on this bill—even today.

We also hope to formalize an agreement for the confirmation of Sarah Jewell to be Interior Secretary.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 680 AND S. 691

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am told—and I believe this is right—there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

The clerk will read the bills by title for a second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 680) to rescind amounts appropriated for fiscal year 2013 for the Department of Defense for the Medium Extended Air Defense System, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 691) to regulate large capacity ammunition feeding devices.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to these two bills.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

IMPACTS OF SEQUESTER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for many months now my Republican friends have promised the impacts of the sequester's arbitrary cuts would be minimal—don't worry about them. When they voiced any concern at all about the sequester cuts, it was over the potential impact on the U.S. military. The impact on middle-class families and the national economy wouldn't be that drastic, they promised in February and in March.

Well, now it is April and contrary to Republican promises, Americans in communities from Massachusetts to Nevada, from coast to coast, in red States and in blue States, are beginning to feel the pinch of those across-the-board cuts.

In the District of Columbia, tourists traveling from home to here for the National Cherry Blossom Festival experienced long lines to go through airport security because of these furloughs. Coming home from Nevada on Sunday there were mobs of people. When anyone sits down to talk to any of them, they will speak about how miserable it is getting through security checks at airports all over the country.

In Murray, UT, a food pantry that feeds more than 1,000 people every month has closed because of these cuts. In Durham, NC, scores of employees at a medical research facility will get pink slips. In central Maine fewer senior citizens will be able to participate with Meals on Wheels. In Bethlehem, PA, more than 100 children are going to be kicked off Head Start.

Now, maybe my Republican friends don't feel this, but I guarantee my colleagues the parents of these little children in Bethlehem, PA, feel it. People waiting in these airport lines feel it.

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

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Why, at this medical research facility, should these people get pink slips? Are they unnecessary? Of course not. If the food pantry in Utah closes, are the people still hungry? Of course they are—more of them than before this cut took place.

In central Nebraska emergency response times have increased significantly since the local airport control tower closed. In southern Ohio the director of the local public defender's office—a man by the name of Steve Nolder—fired himself. He did that rather than lay off other members of his staff. He figured: I am one; I can save the jobs of three people. And that is what he did. That is quite unbelievable, but it is true. He has worked there for 18 years in the public defender's office. I repeat, he gave up his job so three could keep theirs.

Perhaps most concerning of all, community cancer centers around the country are facing difficult choices. For the people who have experienced cancer or experienced cancer in their families, this is something that is noted. Community cancer centers around the country are facing a very difficult choice: send Medicare patients away or just close their doors. The Washington Post reports that because of the sequester cuts to Medicare reimbursements, cancer centers around the country can no longer afford to administer many common drugs. For people who have watched loved ones have chemotherapy—it was just a few months ago when people worried about whether they were going to be able to get the chemo drugs because there was a shortage. Well, now it is widespread.

The Post reports, I repeat, because of the sequester cuts to Medicare, reimbursements for these cancer centers around the country have to make a choice: close or change their hours, which is tough on patients. These clinics, where two-thirds of the cancer patients receive treatments, would lose so much money so quickly they could have to go out of business. So providers are sending cancer patients to overcrowded hospitals instead, not to the cancer centers. For patients in clinical trials for these new cancer drugs—lifesaving experiments—the situation is really dire. Some in these clinical trials are going to have to travel across the country, to Washington, DC, Boston, or New York. People can't afford that, especially when they are sick.

As I said last month, the effects of the so-called sequester didn't break over us like a big wave, they sneaked up on us like a rising tide, and that tide is here now. But the effects are devastating, even though we didn't feel them immediately, and there is more pain to come. That is the sad part about it.

In the coming months, meat inspectors, FBI officers, and Border Patrol agents will be furloughed. We haven't even begun to see the worst of the job losses. There will be 750,000 jobs lost because of sequester across the country.

The overwhelming majority of Americans wanted us to compromise before their friends and family members got pink slips or furloughed or were told there is no more treatment for them even though they have cancer. For some it is already too late. But we can repair that damage, perhaps, and we should do it immediately, to put Americans back to work—no more furloughs.

To give our economy a foundation for growth, we must replace the sequester with a balanced approach to deficit reduction. A balanced approach is one that asks the richest among us to contribute a little bit more—their fair share—to deficit reduction. The rich are willing to do this. If we did this, we would avert cuts that hurt American families, harm our military readiness, and hinder our economic recovery.

I want everyone within the sound of my voice to doublecheck my statistics, but I heard on the radio on the way to work the Pentagon has decided that one-third of all of our aircraft simply will not be used because they don't have enough resources to fuel them. So that training just will not go forward. That is what I heard on the radio, and someone can doublecheck what I heard, but I am confident that is right.

In the House and in the Senate, both Republicans and Democrats voted to impose these cuts quite a long time ago, so it is going to take Republicans and Democrats working together to avert them. That is what we need to do. It is senseless to go on as we are done with these cuts that are done with a meat cleaver, not a scalpel.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Mr. President, would the Chair announce the business of the day this Wednesday.

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

SAFE COMMUNITIES, SAFE SCHOOLS ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 649, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 32, S. 649, a bill to ensure that all individuals who should be prohibited from buying a firearm are listed in the national instant criminal background check system and require a background check for every firearm sale, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, in about an hour the President of the United States will release his budget—65 days after the statutory deadline of February 4, the first Monday in February.

Since taking office, President Obama has raised taxes roughly $1.7 trillion—a number that I know none of us can actually comprehend. But now he wants to raise taxes once again.

I heard the majority leader on the floor this morning advocating for another tax increase. The President's proposed budget will ask for another $800 billion, and that is on top of $600 billion that was the subject of the fiscal cliff negotiations at the end of last year.

The President's budget, which will be released in an hour but which we have heard a lot about already, will never, ever actually balance. Every household in America, 49 States, every municipality, county government, everyone else in America has to live within their means but not the Federal Government.

The President's budget, as I said, does not purport to live within our fiscal means, and it does not balance, but the President says this is a compromise. I heard his spokesman on television say this is not the President's ideal budget; this is what he views as a compromise. But here is the simple reality: America cannot afford this budget, and America cannot afford the President's so-called compromise.

Let's review some recent history.

In November and December of last year, Republicans were asking the President to embrace serious entitlement reform. Everyone who has looked at Medicare and Social Security realizes that both of those programs are on a path to insolvency and that they will not be there for future generations. And we asked for some smart reductions in Federal spending—what we have come to know as wasteful Washington spending—in exchange for more revenue. The President refused, citing the need for a ''balanced'' approach. But I do not want anyone to confuse that with a balanced budget; the President calls for a ''balanced'' approach but never a balanced budget.

Meanwhile, his Treasury Secretary made clear that the White House was absolutely prepared to go over the fiscal cliff—this was in December—unless Republicans agreed to raise taxes. Well, we did not have much choice because after the expiration of the so-called Bush tax cuts, they were going to go up by operation of law. But now, after getting more than $1 trillion in new tax revenue as part of ObamaCare and after getting a separate $620 billion tax increase on January 2, which I have just talked about, as a result of the fiscal cliff negotiations, the President is back for more. It seems as though that is his knee-jerk solution to every fiscal

issue: more taxes, more spending, and more debt.

Not only would his proposed budget raise taxes by more than $800 billion, it would increase annual spending by $2 trillion by 2023 and increase our national debt even more, by $8 trillion. For those keeping score, our gross debt has already increased by more than $6 trillion since the President was sworn into office. It is already larger than our entire gross domestic product—in other words, our entire economy—and we are already spending more than $200 billion a year just on interest payments.

Here is the risk—one of the risks—of this huge overhang of debt: If interest rates were just to go up by 1 percentage point that we had to pay our creditors, such as China, to buy our debt, that would be $1.7 trillion in additional interest we would have to pay on the debt for each percentage point over a 10-year period of time. So you can begin to see very quickly how payment of interest and payment of mandatory programs would quickly crowd out everything else, including national defense expenditures.

A serious long-term fiscal plan must include three elements: progrowth tax reform, which we stand ready to do; structural Medicare reform, which we stand ready to do because we believe we need to preserve and protect Medicare for future generations; and, No. 3, a realistic strategy for reducing our long-term debt burden before we experience a European-style debt crisis. Unfortunately, President Obama's budget does none of that.

Last year, speaking about America's national debt, President Obama's Treasury Secretary told the Republican chairman of the House Budget Committee:

> We're not coming before you to say we have a definitive solution to our long-term [debt] problem. What we do know is we don't like yours.

Since that time, our national debt has grown by $1.4 trillion. Now more than ever, America needs a definitive solution to our debt problem. Now more than ever we need a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution, like one that has been cosponsored by every Member on this side of the aisle. Now more than ever, amid the longest stretch of high unemployment—the highest unemployment—since the Great Depression, we need innovative, progrowth tax reforms that encourage investment and private-sector job creation. Yet the President is still offering more of the same—more taxes, more spending, and more debt. To paraphrase a famous diplomat, it seems the President never misses an opportunity to miss an opportunity.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

CONGRATULATING THE LADY CARDINALS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday I was proud to congratulate Coach Pitino and the Louisville men's basketball team for an impressive national championship win. Today I would like to recognize Coach Walz and the Lady Cardinals for playing their hearts out last night. You know, these women were the lowest seeded team to make it all the way to the title game in decades—and that is really quite an achievement.

So my sincere congratulations to you, Lady Cards. Keep up the hustle for next year's tournament. And to the Connecticut Huskies, congratulations on your hard-fought victory last night. You earned it.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. President, later today we will receive the President's budget. Like nearly every one of his budgets so far, it is late—really late. In the extra 2 months he has kept the country on hold, both the House and the Senate have actually already passed their own budgets. So it is hard to see what the White House plans to accomplish. I want to believe the intention is not to purposely blow up the budget process so the President can campaign against the very budget process he blew up, but from the reports we are seeing, it is getting harder and harder not to draw that conclusion. After all, the document headed our way does not appear designed to bridge the differences between the House- and Senate-passed budgets. That is the role Americans would expect the President to play at this stage. But his budget simply does not represent some grand pivot from left to center; it is really just a pivot from left to left.

I mean, if these reports we are seeing are correct, it is mostly the same old thing that we have seen year after year after year, and that is really too bad because it is not as if we do not know the kinds of things that need to be done to get our budget back to balance and Americans back to work. We need to provide families and businesses a fairer and flatter Tax Code so they can save for the future and create jobs. We do not need a budget that piles on tax increase after tax increase. We need to get government out of the way so the private sector can actually grow again. We do not need a budget that spends more money we do not have. We need a balanced budget that encourages growth and job creation. We do not need an extreme, unbalanced budget that will not balance in your lifetime or mine.

The White House initially made some fantastic claims about the amount of deficit reduction supposedly contained in its budget. But when you cut through the spin and get to the facts, it looks as though there is less than $600 billion worth of reduction in there—and that is over a decade—all of it coming, not surprisingly, from tax increases. In other words, it is not a serious plan—for the most part, just another leftwing wish list. Let me clarify: a wish list, actually, with an asterisk.

The President seems prepared to finally concede this time that at least something needs to be done to save entitlements from their inevitable slide toward bankruptcy. I am glad to see him begin to come to grips with the math. It is well past time for reform, and it is something the President ought to want to do because he presumably cares about saving entitlement programs, not just because he wants yet another excuse to raise taxes.

As we start to think about reforming entitlement programs, we should think about reform this way: Will the changes we make help modernize entitlements over the long term in order to eventually meet the needs of a rapidly aging population in a realistic way or will they just kick the can down the road without actually solving the problem? Remember, kicking the can down the road is how we got to this point in the first place. So we need to have the courage to finally make the tough decisions Americans sent us here to make.

If the President and his allies care about Social Security and Medicare—and I take them at their word that they do—then they need to prove that commitment by proposing ambitious, forward-leaning structural reforms to save them. This budget is their chance to do that, and I hope they will. But if they choose to continue using these programs as campaign weapons instead, then the math points to a clear outcome: The entitlement programs so many Americans rely upon will go bankrupt, and today's Washington Democrats will have to live with that legacy. We cannot get to that point. But Republicans only control a tiny sliver of the Federal Government, so there really is not much we can do until the President and his allies get serious about reform. It is way past time they did.

We do not need another reheated budget. We have had enough of those in the past few years. We need a serious reform-oriented budget. Sadly, I do not believe we will see that one today.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today, finally, we are going to see the President's budget—so we are told. When we look over the history of the last few decades, never has there been a budget submitted so late. The budget is due in February, as we know. With the exception of the first year of a President's term, when a new President comes in, when we give that new administration some time to put together its own budget, this will be the latest budget submission in decades.

I hope the wait will have been worth it. In other words, I hope what the President submits today is something serious, that helps us address the central challenge of our time. I see there are some young pages on the floor. I also met with lots of young people from the Ohio State University this morning. I told them the same thing I

will say today, which is their future is at stake.

It is about our economy, but it is also truly about the future. Are we going to get control of the record debt and deficits and begin to turn our country toward the America that has been something we so much have taken for granted over the past century, which is an America that is growing, that is prospering, where wages are going up, where we have the ability to chart our own course and are a beacon of hope and opportunity for the rest of the world? Or, are we going to continue the slide we are on now, where wages have actually gone down, where America's deficit and debt continue to grow at unacceptable levels, where we risk a financial crisis as we have seen in Southern Europe, in countries such as Greece, places where they did not watch what was happening in terms of their fiscal house.

These countries allowed their debts and deficits to grow to such a large extent that they became as large as the entire economy of those countries. Guess what? As of this year, we are told our debt—our gross debt in this country—is now the size of our entire economy. There are studies out there that indicate that when we get to that kind of a level, there is a big impact on economic growth. We are certainly seeing it, are we not?

We are living through the weakest economic recovery since the Great Depression, whether it is measured in terms of our economic growth or whether it is measured in terms of jobs. We just had a very disappointing report last month on the jobs front showing that we only gained about 88,000 jobs, disappointing all the projections.

But significantly, one-half million people—almost 500,000 people left the workforce. We now have the lowest labor participation rate—meaning that as a percentage of people working or seeking work—that we have had since the days of Jimmy Carter. That is over three decades. In some ways, the policies of Jimmy Carter have been replicated over the last few years in the sense of larger government, more taxes, more regulations.

What we are seeing is, frankly, an economy that is starting to resemble what happened back in the Carter days. That is unacceptable. We need to provide opportunities for Americans who are on that first rung of the economic ladder to get to the second and to the third and to the fourth. Those are the folks who are being hurt the worst with this economic malaise we have with this anemic economic growth, with these job numbers that are so disappointing.

They do relate back to the budget deficit and debt. There is a study by a couple economists named Rogoff and Reinhart that indicate we would have about 1 million more jobs this year alone if we did not have debt at these incredibly high levels.

This year we are told we can expect a deficit of $1 trillion again or more. This is the fourth year in a row. Never in the history of our country have we had debts and annual deficits of $1 trillion. Yet the President's budget, it appears, will not fundamentally change the course we are on. I think from what I have heard from the media reports and so on, it is likely to add about $7 trillion to our debt over the next 10 years, putting our debt that is already at over $16 trillion, again, at a level where it is at the entire size of our economy, where we have unfortunately continued economic doldrums because we cannot get out of this huge overhang of debts and deficits.

It is time to make a change. It is a moment for truth. It is an opportunity to address the challenge. My fear is the President's budget will not be adequate to meet the challenge.

There are some things in the budget I think will be positive. I want to say that. I understand the President is likely to propose a more accurate measure of inflation, when we are talking about how to adjust for cost of living and our programs, including the important and vital but unsustainable program Social Security.

Social Security this year is actually in deficit, meaning that $77 billion is projected to be spent for benefits in Social Security greater than the amount of payroll taxes coming in. So people who say Social Security is OK, it is in fine shape—a $77 billion shortfall is not OK. Also, we are told the disability trust fund will be insolvent, bankrupt, belly up by 2016. That is just a few years from now. More people have gone on disability, unfortunately, than have been added to the work rolls in the last 4 years. Yet this trust fund is going bankrupt in just a few years.

Even if we include all the IOUs in the trust fund for the Old-Age and Survivors Trust Fund, the fundamental trust fund for Social Security, that will be insolvent by 2033. That is not that long from now. Folks who are retiring today, many of whom are likely to live to that point, in other words, for retirees today, they are looking at the possibility of this trust fund going bankrupt.

What happens under law when that goes bankrupt? There is a 25-percent cut in benefits. That is the law. So with this hemorrhaging every year, this year again about $77 billion with these trust funds heading toward insolvency, Social Security does have to be addressed. I commend the President for saying let's use the right measure of inflation. It also happens to affect the benefit side and the tax side. So it actually increases taxes as well because there will not be the same adjustment for the rates for indexing on the income tax side. So there is both revenue gained through this proposal and also there are some savings on the programmatic side because the more accurate measure of inflation is used.

This is a controversial issue among some folks. I understand that. Again, I commend the President for putting it in the budget, as I am told he will. But having said that, this is just one step in the right direction.

Unfortunately, even with that proposal, Social Security will continue to have these enormous shortfalls. On the health care side, I am told the President may make a proposal to reduce some spending in health care. That is a good thing but again not adequate to the task before us. I am told it will be $400 billion. We can argue about where that $400 billion comes from. But it looks like most of it will come out of providers; in other words, the people who are providing health care to lower their reimbursement at a time when more and more providers are saying, we are not interested in providing care under Medicare and Medicaid because the reimbursement is already too low.

So we need to be careful how it is done. But let's assume we could agree on the $400 billion. What would that mean? That would mean that instead of rising 110 percent over the next ten years, Federal health care expenses would go up 100 percent.

The point is we have a challenge in front of us that requires a much more aggressive approach. It requires us to be honest with the American people. It requires us to tell the American people: things are not going well. We are not turning the corner because these incredible debts and deficits do not enable us to do that. It is a shadow over the economy. It is a wet blanket on the economy today. Unfortunately, for the young people listening today, it is going to affect their futures in very significant ways if we do not address the problem.

We will see what happens with this budget proposal today. I am hopeful it will have more in terms of savings than has been suggested in the media. Those savings that are in there, I think we ought to support, as Republicans and Democrats alike, and then encourage the President to work with us on taking it to the next level, to truly address this challenge.

On the tax side, we are told the President is likely to recommend additional increases in tax. Remember, taxes were increased about $620 billion already this year, just a few months ago. So the ink is barely dry on that huge tax increase—some would argue the largest tax increase in the history of our country. Yet the President is apparently likely to recommend taxes at about that level again, $600 billion or more. Some say it is more like $1.5 trillion, which was in the Democratic one offered on the Senate floor. But I am told maybe it is more like $600 billion. But whatever it is, we have to acknowledge that increasing taxes again is going to hurt the economy. There is no question about it. The question is whether it is appropriate to have a higher level of taxation in our economy.

Let's think about that for a moment. We are told by the Congressional Budget Office, which is the nonpartisan

group that analyzes all these budget proposals, that currently we have taxes as a percent of our economy, which is probably how you ought to look at it, at levels in 2015 which would be below our historic average. So in a few short years, we are looking at taxes that they say are 19.1 percent of the economy. What does that mean? Typically, it is about 18.3 percent. So it is higher than the average. We are already, under current law, looking at higher taxes, partly because of the fiscal cliff agreement and the $620 billion in new taxes that were raised over 10 years.

The spending, on the other hand, which is already at levels higher than the historic average—which is about 20 percent, today it is at about 23 percent—is projected to go up and up and up. In fact, over the next three decades, according to the Congressional Budget Office, it goes from 20 percent to, on an average over the last 50 years, about 39 percent.

Then, frankly, they stop counting because they cannot imagine spending at that level because we have no sense of how to get revenue at that level. No one is talking about taxes that would be increased that high. It would be tripling the taxes, at least. So these are issues we need to talk about as a country. How much taxation do we want to have on our economy? How much spending do we want to have? I think what we ought to do is come up with a plan. Ten years from now, where do we want to be? Republicans are calling for a balanced budget. We think true balance means we balance the budget. We stop spending more than we take in. Democrats would like to see more taxes and fewer spending reductions.

We need to come up with something that makes sense for the American people. We need to acknowledge the fact that our issue is not the revenue.

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

Mr. PORTMAN. Instead, it is the spending. That must be addressed. I say to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, let's work together to get America back on track, to solve this problem which, if we do not deal with it, will not allow our economy to prosper. It will not allow America to continue to be that beacon of hope and opportunity for the rest of the world.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Indiana.

THE BUDGET

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I find myself echoing the words of the previous speaker, my good friend from Ohio. I could have given his speech and he probably could give mine because we are both on the same track.

This is an important day. The President will release his budget for 2014. While it is late, it is welcome. We now have three budgets in place. The Senate has voted on a budget, the House has voted on a budget, and the President will be bringing his budget before us. We now have the outlines of the beginning of a discussion and a debate and action that must take place in the next several months.

We have wide differences on of how we need to get to where we need to arrive, but at least now we have something from which to work. I urge my colleagues and the President to work together to achieve what is necessary to put this country on a path to fiscal health. It may be over a period of years. It may be measured out in terms of where we are now in the economy, what needs to be applied now versus what needs to be applied later.

I have said over and over from this platform and others, if we do not incorporate discipline in our spending, we will have clearly out-of-control spending which will continue to grow year after year. This will also grow the deficit and lead to more borrowing each year, putting our country in an evermore difficult position. If we do not include disciplined spending within this budget, we will not achieve what we need to achieve.

Secondly, if we do not address our out-of-control mandatory spending, we will never achieve what we wish to achieve and we will continue to find ourselves in ever deeper holes. The previous speaker, Senator PORTMAN of Ohio, spoke about the need to make structural reforms in mandatory spending programs.

To those who say: You can't touch this. This has been promised to the American people and we cannot even begin to address this issue because these programs should be exempt—those individuals are immune to the reality of the current situation which stands before us. The situation is these programs are going broke. Spending on these programs is unsustainable.

Those organizations—and I will not name them here, but I will at some point in time; we all know who they are—are flooding seniors with mailings saying: Don't let them touch your Social Security. Don't let them touch one dime of your Medicare. You deserve every penny.

They are lying to those people. They are simply telling them they will be in a situation where their benefits are going to need to be reduced dramatically a few years down the line in order to keep the programs from going insolvent.

If we really want to care for and look out for those who are depending on Social Security and Medicare for their later years, we need to stand up now, tell them the truth, and do what is necessary to protect those programs.

Standing by and doing nothing, standing by and listening to outside interest groups who are trying to scare them to death means we are denying those people the future income benefits they are receiving under Social Security and Medicare. Let's have the courage to stand up and do what is right, and do what is right for the very people who are being told we are trying to take something away from them.

Someone said on this budget coming forward—we don't have all the details. There is the good, the bad, and the ugly. I would prefer to say there is the good, the not so good, and the why are we doing this in the first place. However we categorize this, first of all, let's give the President some credit for taking that first small step toward raising the issue of mandatory spending. My understanding is the President will suggest a modification of the Consumer Price Index, which is used to provide for increases each year in these various programs.

Once again we get this doomsday warning: You can't touch this. This is an index which is not correctly applied. We are still simply trying to bring this in line with the actual cost of living for our seniors.

Suggesting this gets the printing presses rolling and all of the interest groups saying to send us $10 to save Social Security and everything else. Even this correction which the President has proposed is being criticized, which is beyond description in terms of how people try to take advantage of our seniors and those on these programs.

Let's give the President credit for putting this in play. It is a small step. It is not nearly as far as we need to go. There are other structural reforms we need to address. Let's at least acknowledge the President has come forward with something sustentative as a modest first step.

Next is the not so good, the call for new spending, new stimulus. We have been through this. We have had nearly $1 trillion of stimulus, about nine-tenths of which is now documented as not stimulating. It is turning out to be a poor, government-selected, so-called investment in the future, which the market has basically said doesn't work.

We have solar manufacturing plants closing all over the world. We see wind farms being raised through subsidies. Yet they cannot connect to the grid. It ignores the new discoveries in natural gas and fossil fuel reserves in America. The cost-to-benefit ratio is way out of balance. I now hear the word ''investment,'' not ''stimulus.'' ''Investment'' is another code word for ''stimulus.'' That means it is a code for we will decide where this money goes.

The problem is the political animal puts its hands around it and the money goes to beneficiaries or supporters for political reasons. Anyway, government shouldn't be in this business.

This is the not so good of the president's budget because it includes $1.5 trillion of additional net Federal spending. At a time when our spending is out of control, how can we come forward with a budget which adds more than $1.5 trillion of new spending and call it investment when it is really just stimulus? We have been there and done that. It doesn't work, so why are we going there again?

Lastly, why are some of these proposals in this budget, such as the new taxes which were suggested by my colleague from Ohio? This budget contains

well over $1 trillion of new taxes on the American people, after we went through this 3 months ago with one of the largest tax increases in history.

Has anyone ever seen an increase in the economic growth through an increase in taxes? Leaving less money in people's paychecks, would this result in more consumer spending which helps our economy?

Adding new taxes, a new tax burden to the American economy, when has that ever created a job? We have staggering numbers of people who are dropping out of the workforce and giving up the search to find jobs. Our unemployment rate, our so-called official rate, is phony, absolutely phony.

People are withdrawing from the workforce because they have given up on ever finding a job. They are simply changing the numbers to make it look as if we are making progress, but as a result we are not making progress.

I notice the majority leader has come to the floor. I wish to conclude by saying we are in a historic time. We are at a crossroads in terms of the future of this country. This is the time when we need to put aside partisan interests, political interests, special interest groups, and stand up to do what is right for the future.

What is the future? As someone famously said: The future is now. The future is now for all of those people out of work. The future is now for all of those college kids graduating without a job to go to. The future is now for our senior citizens who have seen some of their savings eroded through this recession we experienced. The future is now for doing what is necessary to put this country on the right track to prosperity.

Let's work together. I am willing. I informed the President and my colleagues that I am willing to work with them. I know we will have to make some compromises.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. COATS. Let's seize this opportunity.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, it goes without saying we all do our jobs here and we seek a seat in the Senate for a reason. We decided to run for this high office because of issues which deeply motivated us, whether it be more affordable health care, better housing, or lower taxes. In a job like this we are driven to find the issues which move us. Then sometimes there are issues which find us.

When I was elected to the Senate last November, I never imagined my maiden speech would be about guns or about gun violence. I could have never imagined I would be standing here in the wake of 20 young children dying in Sandy Hook or the six adults who protected them. Sometimes issues find you.

Here I am, pleased to have the majority leader, the majority whip, and so many of my colleagues on the Senate floor with me here today.

I wish to start with the unpleasant part. I think it is important for all of my colleagues to understand why we are having this debate this week and next week about gun violence, why for the first time in decades we were able to break the logjam to do something about the waves of gun violence which have plagued this Nation. It is easy to avert our eyes from the horror of what happened in Newtown. It is just easy to close our ears and pretend it didn't happen.

We can't ignore the reality because it is here. On a disturbingly regular basis it is here—in Columbine, Tucson, Aurora, and Sandy Hook. The next town's name is just waiting to be added to the list if we do nothing. Here is what is happening.

Sometime in the early morning hours of December 14, a very disturbed, reclusive young man named Adam Lanza went into his mother's room and shot her dead in her sleep. A few minutes later, maybe hours later, he took his mother's car and drove to Sandy Hook Elementary School. By 9:35 he shot his way through locked doors with an AR–15 semiautomatic rifle, which was owned by his mother.

He began a methodical 10-minute rampage which left 20 children, all 6 and 7 years old, and six adults who cared for them, dead. In 10 minutes, Adam Lanza shot off 154 rounds from a gun which could shoot up to six bullets a second. This high-powered gun assured every single child Adam Lanza shot died. Lanza shot most kids multiple times. Noah Pozner was shot 11 times alone.

The State's veteran medical examiner, who had been on the job for decades, said he had never seen anything such as this.

Several children did escape. Six kids were courageously hid in a classroom closet by their teacher, Victoria Soto, who shielded her kids from the bullets and died that day. Five other kids ran out of the room when Lanza had trouble reloading. Five kids are alive today because the shooter needed to stop and switch ammunition magazines. Whether it is because he had trouble reloading again or because the police were coming into the building at about 9:45, Lanza turned one of his weapons on himself and the massacre ended, but not before 26 people were dead.

This is reality. The worst reality is if we don't do something right now, it is going to happen again.

It is happening every day. To this country, which has become so callously used to gun violence, it is raindrops, background noise. The reality is the one in which we are losing 30 Americans a day to gun violence.

This chart illustrates how many people have died since December 14 and it is almost unreadable because it is a cast of thousands. This reality is just as unacceptable as what happened in Sandy Hook that day.

The question is, Are we going to do anything about it or will we just sit on our hands as we have for 20 years and accept the status quo with respect to everyday gun violence and these increased incidences of mass shooting? If we are really serious about doing our jobs, we can.

Outside the beltway this isn't a debate; this isn't a discussion. Eighty-seven percent of Americans think we should have universal background checks. Everybody who buys a gun should prove he or she is not a criminal. Two-thirds of Americans think we should restrict these high-capacity ammunition clips. Seventy-six percent of Americans believe we should crack down on people who buy guns legally and then go out and sell them in the community illegally.

The American public knows we need to do something. Why have we been stuck for so long? First, it is because Members of Congress have been listening to the wrong people. We should be listening to gun owners. They are comprised of a lower percentage of Americans than 30 years ago.

About one-third of Americans today own guns, and they are very important constituents. The problem is the NRA doesn't speak for gun owners like it used to. Yet we listen to that organization more than we should.

Ten years ago the NRA came here and argued for universal background checks in the wake of Columbine. Today they oppose those background checks even though 74 percent of NRA members support universal background checks. I don't know the exact reason for that, but maybe it is because increasingly the NRA is financed not by its members—by everyday, commonsense gun owners—but by the gun industry. Tens of millions of dollars come into the NRA from the gun industry—a program that actually allows the NRA to make a couple bucks off of every gun sold in many gun stores across the country. We are not listening to gun owners. If we were, this wouldn't be a debate in this Chamber.

But secondly, and maybe most importantly, we have really botched a conversation in this place about rights, and rights really are at the core of this debate. When I am back home in Connecticut, I hear a lot of people talking about the right to bear arms as an ''unalienable right'' or a ''God-given right,'' and of course the Constitution makes no such claim. The idea of an unalienable right is actually found in the Declaration of Independence, and it is a phrase we know very well.

> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

But liberty isn't just about having any gun you want anytime you want it; liberty has to also be about the right to be free from indiscriminate violence. I mean, what kind of liberty did these kids have in that classroom in Newtown, being trapped by an assault

weapon-yielding madman? And maybe more importantly, what kind of liberty does a kid just up the street from here in Washington, DC, have when he fears for his life every time he wants to walk to the corner store or walk home from school? That is not the kind of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness our Founding Fathers talked about.

But even if we do accept that part of liberty is owning and using a gun, then we have to ask ourselves these questions: To what degree are our liberties really infringed upon if we just suggest there are a handful of weapons that are too dangerous to own? To what extent are our freedoms trampled upon by just saying you are going to need to reload your semiautomatic weapon after every 10 bullets rather than after every 30 bullets? How gravely do we really risk tyranny when we just moderately restrain the size of a legally purchasable clip?

If liberty is really our chief concern, then preserving and protecting the life of little kids has to weigh pretty favorably against marginally restraining a weapon's payload. If we can't agree on that, what can we agree on?

If we accept this balance, then the policy prescriptions are pretty simple:

First, guns should be available, but they should be available to people of sound mind with no criminal record. We have believed that for a long time. Since the Brady bill was passed, we have had about 2 million people who were stopped from buying guns because they were legally prohibited from doing so. The Brady bill has worked. The problem is that 40 percent of weapons sold in this country don't go through background checks. I hope we will have some good news by the end of the day on this front, but that is a pretty easily accepted premise—criminals shouldn't own guns.

Second, a small number of guns are just too dangerous for retail sale. We have always accepted that premise as well. We have always drawn a line and said some weapons are reserved for military hands, and others can be in the hands of private citizens. We know assault weapons kill, and we know what happened when we banned them the last time: Gun homicides dropped by 37 percent, and nonlethal gun crimes dropped by an equal percentage.

Third, some ammunition too easily enables mass slaughter. What legitimate reason is there for somebody to be able to walk into a movie theater or a religious institution or a school with a 100-round drum of ammunition? Why do we need that—100 rounds, never mind 30 rounds? That doesn't sound too radical, does it?

So what does the gun lobby tell us about these ideas? What do they say is wrong with this approach that is grounded in data and supported by people all across the country? Well, specifically we hear two things over and over again: First, the only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is to have a good guy with a gun, and second, guns don't really kill people, people kill people.

As to the first argument, Newtown is part of the answer. Nancy Lanza probably owned guns for a variety of reasons, but one of the reasons was that she was divorced, she lived alone, and she wanted guns to protect herself. She was alone a lot of the time. The guns Nancy Lanza used weren't used to fire upon intruders into her home; they killed her, and they killed 26 other boys and girls and parents. That is not just an anecdote, that is a reflection of a statistical trend. If you have a gun in your house, it is four times more likely to be used in an accident than it is against an intruder. If you own a gun, it is much more likely to be used to kill you than it is to kill someone trying to break into your home.

As to the second argument, as author Dennis Henigan once put it, guns don't kill people; they just enable people to kill people. Guns are employed in only about 4 percent of felonies, but they are used in 20 percent of all felonies involving bodily injury. Guns enable violence that is vastly more violent.

How do we know this? Well, we know it by what happened at Sandy Hook that day, but more importantly we know it by what happened on that very same day on the entire other side of the world. On the same day that 20 kids died in Newtown, in Henan, China, a madman walked into a school and attacked 23 schoolchildren with a deadly weapon. The same day—20 kids in Newtown, 23 kids in China. In Newtown, all 20 kids who were attacked died; in China, all 23 kids who were attacked lived. Why? Because in Henan, the assailant had a knife, not a gun that could spray six bullets a second.

So forgive me if I dismiss those—like the president of the NRA—who choose to ignore the effect of the laws we are debating this week and next week. He said all we are talking about here is feel-good legislation. Well, he is right about one thing: It would feel really good if Daniel Barden got on the bus this morning to go to school. Daniel was an immensely compassionate little kid. He was always sitting next to the kids in school who sat alone. He never left a room without turning the lights off. When his family would go to the grocery store, they would leave the store and get halfway across the parking lot and turn around and Daniel wouldn't be there because he was still holding the door open for people who needed a way out. And he loved s'mores.

It would feel really good if Ana Marquez Greene could still sing all those songs she loved. She sang and performed everywhere she went. She came from a very musical family. Her mom said that she didn't walk anywhere, that her preferred mode of transportation was dancing. She loved most to sing and dance in church. She loved it when her parents read to her from the Bible.

It would feel really good if Ben Wheeler got to enjoy this beautiful spring day outside today. He was a piano virtuoso. He had already done a recital when he was 6 years old. But what he really loved was playing outside with his older brother Nate. They loved to play soccer together. The morning he was killed, he told his mom, as they were leaving for school, he wanted to be a paleontologist when he grew up. He said, ''That's what Nate's going to be, and I want to do everything that Nate does.''

So that is our task—to beat back all the naysayers who say that we can't do this, that we won't change the way things are. I believe we can. I believe we are good enough to drown out the voices of the status quo and the lobbyists and the political consultants. I think that in the next couple of weeks we are good enough to change the way things are.

Finally, I want to tell you one last story to explain why I know we are good enough. I believe that when we see people in need, when we see children stripped of their dignity, we are too compassionate a people to close our eyes. I know sometimes we wonder what we really are inside. Are we truly good or is goodness a learned behavior? And it may sound strange, but after December 14, I just know the former to be true, because after enduring the shooting, as if to swallow up those 10 minutes of evil, millions of acts of infinite kindness rained down on Newtown, from the teachers who protected those kids, to the firefighters who didn't leave that firehouse for days afterward, to the millions of actions of humanity and gifts and phone calls that came in from the rest of the world.

And because of Anne Marie Murphy. Anne Marie was a special education teacher charged with the care of Dylan Hockley, this little boy, a wonderful, gentle little 6-year-old boy who was living with autism but doing great at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Anne Marie loved Dylan, and Dylan loved Anne Marie back. There was a picture on his refrigerator of Anne Marie, and almost every day he would point to Anne Marie with pride to his parents.

Nicole, his mom, who is here this week, said at Dylan's funeral that when she realized Dylan wasn't going to show up at the firehouse that day with all the other kids who were returning from the school, she hoped she would see Mrs. Murphy, but she knew she wouldn't. She knew Anne Marie wouldn't leave Dylan's side if he was in danger. And she didn't. When the bullets started flying, she brought Dylan into her arms. She held him tight inside that classroom. And that is just how the two of them were found.

On Monday, Nicole flew down here to Washington with President Obama and me to try to make the case that things need to change for Dylan, for Anne Marie, and for the thousands of other people before and after who have been killed by guns.

As Nicole and the other parents walked up the steps of Air Force One, one mom raised a piece of paper above

her head with a note she had scribbled on it that day, and the cameras caught the moment. The note simply said ''Love Wins.'' I believe today more than I ever have before that if we are truly doing our job in this Chamber, then love has to win every single time.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate and thank my colleague from Connecticut, Senator MURPHY, on his profoundly eloquent and powerful statement to our colleagues and join him in calling attention to the horrific tragedy that has brought us to this point in the debate on gun violence. His very eloquent and powerful summary of our losses, I think, is a way to begin a potential turning point after Newtown has given us a call to action. Newtown is a tipping point in this debate, and my colleague from Connecticut and I have spent literally days and weeks with that community and have seen the courage and strength they have brought to this town and to our colleagues, because they have been meeting with our colleagues and they are indeed here today.

Benjamin Andrew Wheeler, who was 6 years old—his father David is here today. Ana Grace Marquez-Greene, age 6—her mother Nelba is here today. Dylan Hockley, age 6—his mother Nicole is here. Daniel Barden, age 7—his mother Jackie and his father Mark are here. Jesse Lewis, age 6—his father Neil Heslin is here. Mary Sherlach, one of the six heroic educators killed at Sandy Hook—her husband Bill is here today.

We can draw inspiration not only from the memories of those children and great educators who were killed but from their strength and resilience and resolve in coming to the Halls of this building, meeting with our colleagues. Indeed, at this very moment, they are with one of our colleagues, looking him in the eyes and saying to him: How can you not approve a bill that stops illegal trafficking, strengthens school safety, and imposes a requirement for criminal background checks? How can you not stop assault weapons and high-capacity magazines that were integral to that killing in Newtown? How can you not do something about gun violence that has caused more than 3,000 deaths since then? How can you not allow a vote? How can you deprive the American people of a vote on a measure that is so essential to their safety, their well-being, the futures of their children, and their communities?

As the President of the United States has said so eloquently—and his leadership has been so important to this cause—the victims of Newtown, of Tucson, Aurora, Virginia Tech, they deserve a vote. The likelihood of a vote has been increased by the leadership of my colleagues, Senator SCHUMER, Senator MANCHIN, Senator TOOMEY, who have worked hard together to bring us to a very promising and profoundly constructive turning point in this process. I want to thank also our leader, Senator HARRY REID, for his determination and resolve.

On the morning of December 14, parents throughout Connecticut and Newtown and Sandy Hook brought their children to school. Thinking of the rest of their days. When they would have play dates and snack breaks, holiday parties, Christmas and Hanukkah present wrapping, paper angels, gingerbread, songs and poems. Those are the memories. And the futures they brought with them. Just hours later, I was at Sandy Hook as 20 families of those children emerged from a firehouse, and I will never forget the cries of pain and grief I saw on that day. I went there as a public official because I felt a responsibility to be there. But what I saw was through the eyes of a parent, as all America did on that day. And I saw the families also of six heroic educators who perished trying to save their children. Those sights and sounds changed America. We are different today than we were before Sandy Hook. This problem is with us, the problem of gun violence is the same problem that has existed for decades, but we are different. Because we know we can and must do something about it.

There was evil that day at Sandy Hook, but there was also great goodness. The goodness of the first responders who stopped the shooting through their bravery. When they appeared at the school, the shooter turned the gun on himself. They saved lives. The knowledge and courage and bravery of the clergy. Father Bob, Monsignor Bob, Robert Weiss, who that evening conducted a vigil that we attended, when many resolved to light candles instead of curse the darkness. The greatness of leadership demonstrated by many of our public officials, beginning with Pat Llodra, the First Selectwoman of Newtown, the legislators who passed in Connecticut a measure that will provide a model for the country in attacking the problem of gun violence and the leadership of our Governor, Dannel Malloy. And, of course, the great goodness of the educators who threw themselves at bullets, cradled the young people seeking to save them, and heroically gave their lives. Their models of courage and leadership should inspire us at this critical moment. They should inspire us to think better and do better and resolve that we will not let this moment pass, we will seize this opportunity and we will demonstrate the kind of leadership the majority of Americans expect and deserve and need at this point.

The majority of Americans want commonsense measures to stop gun violence. The majority of Americans want a vote and they want action from this body. And we need to keep faith with them but also with the victims. The victims who should not be forgotten, the Connecticut effect is not going away. This resolve is not dissipated. We will keep faith with them.

Out of the tragedy, the unspeakable loss, the unimaginable horror of that day and the days since then and the days to come, we resolve that this country will be better and safer. And so as we begin this debate, as colleagues of ours at this moment announce a very promising compromise that may lead us forward, provide us with a path toward bipartisan action—and it should be bipartisan; there is nothing Republican or Democratic about law enforcement or about law enforcement saving people's lives. We should resolve to go forward as one country. I've been working on this issue for many years. I helped to author and support Connecticut's first assault weapons ban in the early 1990s. I went to court to defend it when it was challenged constitutionally, argued in the trial and then in the State supreme court to uphold our law. I have worked with law enforcement colleagues for three decades. And I know they support these measures. Our State and local police, our prosecutors around the country support a ban on illegal trafficking. They support a national background check system. They support school safety and they support bans on military-style weapons that are simply designed to kill and maim innocent people and they support a ban on high-capacity magazines because they know, those are the weapons of war. They enable criminals to outgun them. They put their lives at risk. And so I listen to my colleagues in law enforcement who tell me we need to do something about gun violence. I listen to the people of Newtown who say: Can't we do something about the guns? And I respect the rights of gun owners, the second amendment is the law of the land, and none of these proposals would take guns out of the hands of responsible and lawful gun owners. But there are some people who should not have them.

There are some guns that should not be in use, and there are some weapons of war, high-capacity magazines, that should not be sold in this country. In half the mass killings, high-capacity magazines enabled the shooting that occurred so rapidly and so lethally. In Newtown, the changing of a magazine by the shooter enabled children to escape. In Tucson, the killing of a 9-year-old girl, Christina Taylor-Green, by the 13th bullet, would not have happened if that magazine had been limited to 10 rounds because the shooter was tackled as he tried to change magazines. The high-capacity magazines enabled Adam Lanza to fire 154 bullets in 5 minutes. So these kinds of commonsense measures may not prevent all these tragedies. They may not enable us to stop all the 3,000 killings that have occurred since Newtown. We cannot look back and say with certainty that Newtown would not have occurred if these measures had been in place, but the likelihood would have been reduced, some or

all of those children might be alive today, some of those heroic educators could be in their classrooms now. And the challenge here is to save lives, to do something to stop the carnage and killing on our streets, in our neighborhoods, in communities such as Newtown, a quintessential New England town. If it could happen in Newtown, it could happen anywhere in America.

As we go forward in this debate, I hope we will listen to those brave and resilient and resolved families who are here today. Listen to them when they say to us that we must keep faith. Listen to Nicole Hockley and what she said when the President of the United States visited Connecticut just a couple days ago. She said:

> But now there is no going back for me. There is no way. If you want to protect your children, if you want to avoid this loss, you will not turn away either.

I ask my colleagues, let us face this reality. Let us not turn away. Let us resolve to go forward and keep faith with the children and the educators who, by their example, provide us with an enormous and historic opportunity to make America safer and better. The Nation that we love, the Nation that we all believe is the greatest in the history of the world and will be greater still after we move forward to make it safer and better.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise this morning to speak in regard to the Keystone XL Pipeline project. Much has been made recently about pipeline spills in Arkansas and in Texas. These spills are being used by opponents of the Keystone XL Pipeline project as examples or reasons to not approve the Keystone Pipeline. Now, no one ever wants a spill of any kind, but let's deal with the facts rather than misperception or emotion. This is an important project, and it is important that we deal with the facts.

The Exxon spill in Arkansas involves a pipeline known as the Pegasus pipeline. This pipeline was built in the 1940s—1947 and 1948. Approximately 5,000 barrels of oil were spilled. The EPA considers that a major spill because anything above 250 barrels is considered a major spill. Emergency response personnel were on the ground within 30 minutes of the leak being detected. Approximately 640 cleanup people have responded to the incident in addition to Federal, State, and local responders.

There has been no impact to the drinking water. I will repeat that: There has been no impact to the drinking water, and the oil did not enter any lake or waterway. Fourteen vacuum trucks and sixteen storage tanks are on site. The claim's hotline has been established for residents affected by the spill to register claims and for anyone who wants information. As of today about 140 claims have been made. ExxonMobile is paying for the cleanup and they have committed to honor any valid claims. So that is the Arkansas spill that much is being made about by opponents of approving the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The other one they talked about is in West Columbia, TX, and that is a pipeline owned by Shell Oil. Let's talk about that project for just a minute.

There was approximately 950 barrels of oil spilled, and 50 barrels of that oil entered the waterway. All 50 barrels have been cleaned up. Let me repeat that: All 50 barrels have already been cleaned up. The company is now working to clean up the remaining 900 barrels of oil that is located on land.

This pipeline is an oil-gathering pipeline that gathers oil from the gulf. It is not an oil sands pipeline. The Keystone XL Pipeline, of course, would be an oil sands pipeline, and that is not what this is. Furthermore, Shell believes the break in this pipeline happened because a contractor was working in this area and perforated the pipe. There was not a default in the pipe or the pipe leaking. They believe the injury to the pipeline was caused by a worker in that area.

Let's consider some basic pipeline safety facts. Pipelines are the safest and most efficient way to transport oil and gas. Let's compare accidents at pipelines to accidents for trucks, for barges, or for rail. Accidents are 1,000 times more likely to occur with a truck hauling oil versus a pipeline. What was that number? Accidents are 1,000 times more likely to occur when moving oil by truck than by pipeline. An oilspill is 13 times more likely to occur when it is moved by a barge versus a pipeline. Oilspills are five times more likely if it is moved by rail than by pipeline.

Using a pipeline to transfer oil will result in 1,000 fewer spills compared to moving it by truck, 13 times fewer spills than moving it by barge, and five times fewer spills than moving it by rail. Those are the safety statistics on pipelines versus alternative methods of moving oil.

The Arkansas pipeline was built in the 1940s, so actually the incident highlights the need to build new infrastructure using the latest technology. The Keystone XL Pipeline is one of the most advanced and most studied pipeline projects in our country's history. For example, the Keystone XL Pipeline will be monitored through a centralized high-tech center 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Satellite technology will send data every 5 seconds from 21,000 data points to the monitoring center. If a drop in pressure is detected, any section of the pipeline can be isolated remotely thereby closing any of the hundreds of valves on the system within minutes.

After four environmental impact statements and 5 years of review, the State Department has determined that the Keystone XL Pipeline will create no significant impacts to the environment. Again, they have determined it will create no significant impacts to the environment, and that is why several weeks ago 62 Senators supported an amendment that was sponsored by myself, Senator BAUCUS, and other Senators. Again, 62 Senators went on record approving the Keystone XL Pipeline project.

Furthermore, 66 Senators, two-thirds of the Senators, voted against an amendment that was put forward by Senator BOXER that would have further delayed the project and added more restrictions to the project. Two-thirds of this body went on record opposing more delays and more restrictions; 62 Senators then voted to approve the project. That is why 70 percent of Americans in a recent poll said they want the Keystone XL Pipeline approved.

This project is about more energy and more jobs for this country. This pipeline project is about growing our economy and producing tax revenues to help with our debt and deficit, not by raising taxes but by growing the economy and stimulating more economic activity. This project is about eliminating our dependence on oil from places such as the Middle East and Venezuela. That is a national security issue.

It is vital that when we are working on important issues, we deal with the facts, and those are the facts.

I thank the Chair, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LEE. Madam President, for several weeks now Washington and the rest of the country have been debating several new gun control proposals. Along with a number of my colleagues, including the minority leader, I have declared my intention to resist an immediate vote on any new restrictions that would serve primarily to limit the freedoms of law-abiding citizens rather than reduce violent crime in America.

Unfortunately, the current gun control proposals would do just that. More than 2 weeks ago, we informed the majority leader that we will exercise our procedural right to require a 60-vote threshold in order to bring this legislation to the floor. We have taken this step under our Senate rules and procedures for three principal reasons.

First, the Senate serves an important function in our Republic by encouraging deliberation and making it more

difficult for a temporary majority to impose its will unilaterally. Unlike the House of Representatives, the Senate's rules and procedures allow for meaningful debate and help ensure that a bare majority of Senators cannot impose controversial legislation on the American people without robust debate, discussion, and broad-based and bipartisan consensus.

Contrary to the statements made by the President and by some of my friends across the aisle and even a few from within my own caucus, we have no intention of preventing debate or votes. Quite the opposite. By objecting to the motion to proceed, we guarantee that the Senate and the American people would have at least 3 additional days to assess and evaluate exactly how this particular bill might affect the rights of law-abiding citizens and whether it might have any significant impact on violent crime.

Already we have seen consensus against passing any new gun legislation—at least not without broad bipartisan support.

During the recent budget debate, I offered an amendment to establish a two-thirds vote requirement for the passage of any new gun legislation. Six Democratic Senators voted with a nearly united Republican caucus to support my amendment by a vote of 50 to 49.

That vote demonstrated that a bare majority of Senators, including at least six Democrats, believe that new gun legislation should have broad bipartisan support in the Senate before it is passed and before it has the opportunity to become law.

A 60-vote threshold will help ensure that new gun laws are not forced through the Senate with the narrow support of just one party.

Second, this debate is about a lot more than just magazine clips and pistol grips. It is about the purpose of the second amendment and why our constitutionally protected right to self-defense is an essential part of self-government.

At its core, the second amendment helps ensure that individuals and local communities can serve as the first line of defense against threats to our persons and our property. Any limitation on this fundamental right of self-defense makes us more dependent on our government for our own protection.

Government cannot be everywhere at all times, so the practical effect of limiting our individual rights is to make us less safe. This is troubling to many Americans. Any legislation that would restrict our basic rights to self-defense deserves serious and open debate. Further, as we have seen just today, Washington sometimes prefers to negotiate backroom deals made in secret far from the eyes of the American people rather than engaging in thorough, open, and transparent debate right on the Senate floor.

The day before the majority leader has set the vote to proceed, the bill's critical components are still not there. Right before we have set the vote for the motion to proceed to the bill, we still do not know what these critical components look like. We have no legislative text to evaluate the so-called compromise language on background checks. We have no sense of what amendments, if any amendments at all, might be allowed to be offered.

So requiring a 60-vote threshold helps us solve some of those problems. It helps us ensure that we have a meaningful debate rather than a series of backroom deals to push controversial legislation through Congress with solely a bare majority to back it up.

Finally, many of the provisions we expect to see in the bill are both constitutionally problematic and would serve primarily to limit the freedoms of law-abiding American citizens. Some of the proposals—for example, universal background checks—would allow the Federal Government to surveil law-abiding citizens who exercise their constitutional rights.

One of the provisions we expect to see in the bill, based on what we saw in the Judiciary Committee on which I sit, would allow the Attorney General of the United States to promulgate regulations that could lead to a national registry system for guns, something my constituents in Utah are very concerned about, and understandably so.

You see, the Federal Government has no business monitoring where or how often we go to church, what books and newspapers we read, whom we vote for, our health conditions, what we ate for breakfast, and the details of our private lives, including our lawful exercise of rights protected by the second amendment and other provisions of the Bill of Rights.

Such limitations may, of course, at times make it harder for the government to do what it believes it needs to do. But we have to remember, the Constitution was not written to maximize or protect the convenience of our government. The Constitution was written to protect individual liberty, and thankfully so. We must not narrow the application of constitutional protections in haste, nor should we allow a bare majority to jeopardize the basic rights of the American people, rights protected in the first ten amendments to the Constitution.

The Senate and the American people are engaged in an important debate. I look forward to this debate. I hope others will join me and my colleagues in demanding that our discussions take place in full view of the American people.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE BUDGET

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, at long last today we have received the President's budget. It is several weeks actually months—overdue. It was supposed to have been out on February 4. It is generally used to steer or guide the budget debate we have in Washington, DC. In this case, it is going to be a reaction to. It is going to be an after-the-fact discussion of the budget, as the House and the Senate have both passed theirs; the Senate for the first time in 4 years and the House has passed their budget every year on time. One would wish the President's budget would serve as a bridge between the House and the Senate. In this point of the process it is so much after the fact and late in the game the President's budget has come to us.

Regrettably, much of the President's budget is going to rely on the same formula the Senate Democratic budget did, which is to double down, to increase spending, significantly and substantially raise taxes, and add massive amounts to the debt. It never balances.

The budget which was passed by the House of Representatives did balance. It balanced in 10 years.

The budget which was passed by the Senate did not balance in 10 years. It never balanced. There was a real contrast in terms of trying to get to a balanced budget over a period of time, knowing full well it will not happen overnight. We got into a very big hole over a number of years, and it will take us a while to get out.

Nevertheless, the House budget did balance in a 10-year window and 10-year timeframe. The Senate Democratic budget never balances, nor does the budget we received this morning from the President.

For a lot of reasons this budget debate is important, not the least of which is it is a vision, a blueprint for the future of the country. This is true for each of the respective parties in the Congress, as well as the President, about where they wish to lead the country.

I mentioned yesterday on the Senate floor I thought the basic criteria which should be used to evaluate a budget, the question which should be asked is, What will this budget do to grow the economy, create jobs, and increase the take-home pay of middle-class Americans? What can we do, in other words, in terms of a budget process here and a budget itself which actually takes us in a direction which would enable more Americans to work and enable the economy to grow and expand again. This would make these fiscal issues look much smaller by comparison.

Last week we received employment data statistics which were due. The unemployment rate as a percentage actually dropped to 6.7 percent but only because another half million people quit looking for work. If we look at the real unemployment rate—which is to include the people who actually have stopped looking for work, people who

are working part-time because they can't find full-time employment—the actual unemployment rate is 13.8 percent. This is 21.7 million Americans. This is how many people who are either out of work, quit looking for work, or are looking for work part-time because they simply can't find full-time employment. This is a great number of people.

This is a big part of our economy. A lot of folks are out of the workforce today who couldn't find jobs. Many have actually just given up looking for jobs.

What this has done, because there are so many Americans who have given up looking for jobs out of frustration, is it has lowered the labor participation rate to a rate we haven't seen, literally, since 1979. The last time the labor participation rate was at the low level we saw in the month of March, 63.3 percent, was 1979.

In fact, if we had a labor participation rate which was equal to what it was when the President took office in January 2009, the unemployment rate today would not be 7.6 percent, it would be 11 percent. This is how many people have quit looking for work as a result of this slow and sluggish economy.

The President's budget, one would hope, would try to answer in an affirmative way the question: Does this grow the economy? Does this create jobs? Does this increase the take-home pay of working Americans?

Unfortunately, rather than growing the economy, the President's budget, instead, grows the government. Unfortunately, this is what we have seen in the budget which was passed by the Senate a couple of weeks ago.

I say this simply because I think there are two very different ideas about how to solve the fiscal crisis we face. One includes expanding and growing government, raising taxes, and adding even more to the debt. One really focuses on the issue which plagues our fiscal house in Washington, DC: not that we tax too little but we spend too much. It goes after the spending problem we have in Washington, DC, the addiction to spending. We have seen this as the percentage of our economy grow consistently over the last several years since this President has been in office.

The House budget recognized this and does balance in 10 years. It does it without increasing taxes. The House of Representatives actually produced a budget which balances in 10 years and doesn't raise taxes. In fact, it calls for tax reform. Many of us believe this would do wonders in terms of unleashing economic growth in this country, lowering rates, reducing rates, and broadening the base. It also takes on what really drives Federal spending, what really contributes to the debt crisis we have in this country, its runaway spending.

This is true for particular areas of the budget, the areas we call mandatory spending, the part of the budget which is on autopilot. It includes entitlement programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Currently, this includes about three-fifths of all Federal spending. At the end of the 10-year window it will represent about 91 percent of all Federal spending. That is how fast those programs are growing—two to three times the rate of inflation.

The President's budget doesn't do anything significant or meaningful to address that crisis. It is flatout serious.

Having said that, there were some what I would call incremental steps taken. I call them baby steps. The President agreed in his budget to address the issue of chained CPI, which recalculates the formula under which certain government programs are calculated. It achieves a certain level of savings over time.

They assume some savings in Medicare, most of which, again, are by reducing payments to providers. We have already cut payments to providers to the point many physicians and other health care providers these days are saying they are not going to serve Medicare or Medicaid patients because we keep cutting those reimbursements.

This is not the way to save and protect these programs for future generations. We must restructure or reform these programs in a way which aligns those programs with the future demographics of this country. Unfortunately, the President's budget fails on that account.

In terms of the direction these various budgets are headed, the Senate's Democratic budget, because it didn't balance in 10 years, nor does the President's, both use similar assumptions about spending. If we look at the new debt which is piled up by the President's budget, he adds $8.2 trillion to the debt over the next decade.

The Senate Democratic budget added $7.3 trillion to the debt over the next decade. Both have net spending increases. The spending amount over the 10-year period in both the President's budget proposal and the Senate Democratic proposal is on the order of $46.5 trillion. This is the amount of money, the amount of taxpayer money, the Federal Government would spend over the next decade under the budgets proposed by the Senate and House Democrats.

The House budget, passed largely by the House Republicans, spends about $5 trillion less than that over the same time period. How does it do that? It does so by reducing the rate of growth of Federal spending. If we limit the rate of growth in Federal spending to 3.4 percent, as opposed to a 4.6-percent number in the Senate Democratic budget or the 5.2 percent-increase in mandatory spending called for in the President's budget, we may achieve significant savings over a period of time.

This is not cutting government but simply slowing the rate of growth by growing government at a slower rate and moving it back into a more reasonable level. This would actually achieve $5 trillion in savings over the next decade in terms of what the Federal Government was spending. This is the way the House approached their budget.

What the Senate Democrats and the President have both done is called for massive new tax increases. The only deficit reduction which will occur under the President's budget will be cut because of tax increases. He wipes out the $1.2 trillion in spending cuts which were in place as a result of sequester.

He replaces those and achieves somewhere on the order of $600 billion in deficit reduction. This deficit reduction would be entirely accomplished by tax increases, raising taxes yet again after we put in place tax increases on the fiscal cliff on January 1. The President received a huge tax increase, something he had been wanting for for some time, $620 billion in new taxes. Add this to the more than $1 trillion in new taxes which are in the ObamaCare bill passed a couple of years ago and this President, on his watch, has signed into law more than $1.7 trillion in new taxes.

This is not a revenue problem, this is a spending problem. What we need to be focused on is what do we need to do to rein in out-of-control Federal spending. How are we going to reform and restructure these programs in a way which protects and saves them, not only for people who depend upon them today but for those who will need them in the future. This is really the question before the House.

Today we receive the President's budget. It will be the latest point at which the President has submitted a budget. Literally, it has been 100 years, let's put it that way. Around the early 1900s was the last time the President submitted a budget to this Congress at this late date. Again, having already acted in the House and Senate, I am not sure what meaning it has other than to perhaps give the President the luxury to be able to say he actually at least presented a budget. But on most of the criteria we ought to be looking at, in terms of evaluating this budget, that I mentioned earlier, it is not a serious attempt. It doesn't do anything to rein in these out-of-control programs that are growing at two to three times the rate of inflation, it has a massive tax increase, a $1 trillion tax increase on top of the $1.7 trillion in new taxes the President has already signed into law, and it adds $8.2 trillion to the debt over the next decade. So for that reason I think it fails the fundamental test of fiscal responsibility, but more important perhaps even than that, it fails to answer the question I posed earlier, which was: Does the President's budget grow the economy, does it create jobs, and does it increase take-home pay for middle-income Americans? The answer to that is simply no.

When you are raising taxes consistently—raising taxes on the people who create the jobs in our economy—it makes the economy grow at a slower rate, we have more sluggish growth, which is what we have seen now for the past several years. When we are growing at 1½ to 2 percent as opposed to 3 to 4 percent, it makes a huge difference in terms of the number of people in this country who are employed, the number of jobs that are created, and, obviously, it makes a huge difference in terms of the fiscal imbalance, because when the economy is growing at a faster rate, it means more people are working and investing and, therefore, making money and paying taxes. So tax revenues go up when the economy is growing and expanding.

That ought to be the goal. That ought to be our goal—not only to get those 21.7 million Americans who are out of work back to work but also to get the fiscal imbalance we face in a more manageable place. If we are going to get our fiscal house in order, we have to do those two things: We have to restrain Federal spending and we have to put policies in place that grow the economy.

There is a relationship between the two. It has been well documented, well studied, well researched that when we have spending that is out of control, when we have a debt as a percentage of our GDP that exceeds a certain level, it harms economic growth. It reduces the amount the economy grows on an annual basis and, in so doing, also reduces the number of jobs created. So this is the question that should be asked. Again, when we compare or stack up the President's budget against that question—does it grow the economy, does it create jobs, does it increase the take-home pay for middle-class Americans—the answer is simply no.

I would compare again the budget that was passed by both the House and Senate. In the case of the Senate, a study was done that suggested it would cost 800,000 jobs a year, again because of the tax increases that are included and the higher level of Federal spending. Simply raising taxes to fuel yet more Federal spending does nothing to grow the private economy. What we want to see is a smaller Federal economy and a bigger private economy where the real good-paying jobs are created. Clearly, this budget relies heavily—doubles down on Federal spending, adds more to the debt, doesn't achieve balance, increases taxes by $1 trillion, and takes us in absolutely the wrong direction.

I hope before this is all said and done, the House of Representatives and the Senate—both of which have passed budgets and now that we have the President's budget—can somehow sit down together and figure out how we get a proposal that would actually deal with out-of-control spending and would focus on growing the economy, creating jobs, and increasing the take-home pay for middle-class Americans. That ought to be the criteria we use.

I would hope before this is all said and done, people in this city would realize we don't have a taxing problem. The problem isn't that we tax too little, it is that we spend too much, and that is what needs to be addressed. I hope we can reconcile these budgets, but it will require the President to be engaged on a level he hasn't demonstrated so far. I hope he gets to what this real issue is and wants to get serious about reining in out-of-control government spending and we can make some headway yet. I have not lost hope. There were some incremental gains, some baby steps the President took in this, but it is far short of what needs to be done to get our economy back on track and get government spending back under control.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I am honored to stand again on the floor of the Senate, as I will be doing, along with my colleague Senator MURPHY and others who are allied in this effort to make America safer and to stop the scourge of gun violence that has plagued this country for decades and has been dramatized so horrifically and tragically by the nightmarish, unspeakable tragedy that occurred in Newtown. I stand here on behalf of the families, but they are speaking much more eloquently and powerfully than I could ever do, as they go around to the offices of my colleagues and look them in the face and say:

How could you not favor a ban on illegal trafficking and straw purchases? How could you not support strengthening school safety? How could you not favor a national criminal background check?

As one police chief told me, a national background check makes sure we do not put criminals on the honor system. Without a criminal background check, criminals are on an honor system to not buy weapons. What kind of a guarantee of safety would that be? And how could you not be in favor of banning the kind of weapon that killed the children and educators of Newtown or the high-capacity magazine that enabled and facilitated that killing to take place? 154 bullets fired in 5 minutes, tearing apart those beautiful, innocent children and six great educators who perished trying to save them.

We are on the cusp of success in this critical first step, and I am increasingly hopeful—in fact, I am confident that we will have a vote in this body on gun safety measures. We will have a vote in the United States Senate to impose sensible and commonsense measures to stop gun violence. We will have a vote in the Senate in a matter of days that will enable America to hold accountable its elected representatives here on this floor in the Senate for measures that will stop gun violence in this country that has killed 3,000 or more people since Newtown. The epidemic of gun violence is stoppable and we will have a vote in this body that makes sure all of us are held to answer to the American people. The majority of the American people favor these measures. Ninety percent or more say they want a national criminal background check. Their voice deserves a vote, and I am confident we will have it.

I am confident, in part, because of the bipartisan compromise that has been announced today. I am going through the details, listening to my colleagues in law enforcement, the mayors, and others who have been so responsible and resolute in working over years and decades for these kinds of measures. And I'm listening to the families from Newtown. And we will make sure this compromise vindicates and upholds the vital law enforcement and safety interests these measures are designed to vindicate and uphold. And I am confident this compromise is a positive and constructive step toward our having a vote, ending unlimited debate on this bill, achieving cloture, and stopping a filibuster, as we have a responsibility to do.

And I want to focus for the moment on one aspect of these measures I consider critically important. A ban on high-capacity magazines—all magazines, all clips that hold more than 10 bullets—that I will be introducing on behalf of Senator LAUTENBERG, working with Senator FEINSTEIN and others, to make sure this measure has a vote, whether it's as an amendment or a separate bill. I wish to thank Senator LAUTENBERG for his leadership on this issue. He has championed it here for some time, and I will be working with him and others to make sure this measure I have introduced has a vote, and my colleague Senator MURPHY will be working with me in this effort.

The statistics show the terrible impact of high-capacity magazines. A recent study of 62 mass shootings since 1982 shows that half involved high-capacity magazines. Statistics also show bans on high-capacity magazines actually work. The 1994 ban on these devices reduced their use dramatically. A study of gun violence in Virginia showed just 10 percent of guns recovered by police in 2004 used high-capacity magazines, but after the ban was allowed to sunset, the prevalence of high-capacity magazines more than doubled. Garen Wintemute, head of the Violence Prevention Research Program at the University of California at Davis School of Medicine, said: ''I was skeptical that the ban would be effective, and I was wrong.'' He said the database analysis offers ''about as clear an example as we could ask for of evidence that the ban was working.'' And the limitation I am proposing—that I will be working on with Senator LAUTENBERG and Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator MURPHY and others who have

championed this cause—would be even more effective. Because unlike the 1994 law, it will prohibit imports of high-capacity magazines, not just production here but imports of these high-capacity magazines. More than ten rounds, we need to say no.

We also have to implement a buyback program for the existing high-capacity magazines in use and circulation today. The proposal I'm advocating allows for better grant funding to be used for exactly that purpose. It doesn't require, doesn't mandate owners of high-capacity magazines participate in a buyback program, but it gives them that option. And over time, this measure will reduce the number of high-capacity magazines out there. The provision I am spearheading was part of legislation actually offered by Senator FEINSTEIN in the Judiciary Committee, approved by that committee on March 14. It's supported by a long list of mayors as well as organizations representing law enforcement.

I ask unanimous consent to have that list printed in the RECORD.

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

This legislation has been approved by, among others, the following groups:

LAW ENFORCEMENT

International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators
International Association of Chiefs of Police
Major Cities Chiefs Association
National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives
National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
Police Executive Research Forum
Police Foundation
Women in Federal Law Enforcement

HEALTH CARE

American Academy of Nursing
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Surgeons
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Medical Association
American Public Health Association
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare
Doctors for America
National Association of School Nurses
National Physicians Alliance
Physicians for Social Responsibility

EDUCATION AND CHILD WELFARE

American Federation of Teachers
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Defense Fund
National Association of Social Workers
National PTA
National Education Association
Save the Children

GUN SAFETY

Arizonans for Gun Safety
Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence
Coalition to Stop Gun Violence
Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence
Mayors Against Illegal Guns
Newtown Action Alliance

RELIGIOUS

African Methodist Episcopal Church
Alliance of Baptists
American Friends Service Committee
Catholic Charities USA
Catholics United
Faiths United To Prevent Gun Violence
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
National Council of Churches
National Episcopal Health Ministries
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Public Witness
United Methodist Church

OTHER ORGANIZATINS

American Bar Association
Grandmothers for Peace International
NAACP
Sierra Club

LOCALITIES

U.S. Conference of Mayors
National League of Cities.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. This provision is supported as well by educators, the civil rights community, health care providers and others. It is a proposal that is eminently sensible, reasonable. It's a matter of common sense. A majority of Americans have consistently supported a ban on high-capacity magazines. A poll in January of this year showed 65 percent of Americans, including 55 percent of gun owners, support such a ban.

But the most powerful argument for a ban on high-capacity magazines comes from the experience of Newtown, where the changing of magazines enabled children to escape. When the shooter changed magazines, it allowed time for the children to evade his nightmarish slaughter.

In Tucson, we know from CAPT Mark Kelly, husband of Gabby Giffords, who testified before the Judiciary Committee, that the limitation on that magazine enabled spectators and bystanders to tackle the shooter. If there had been only 10 rounds in that magazine he was using, Christina-Taylor Green, shot by the 13th bullet, would be alive today. We know high-capacity magazines enable and facilitate these mass killings. They don't cause them. They don't compel them. They enable them. High-capacity magazines allowed Adam Lanza to fire more than 150 rounds of ammunition in 5 minutes. And we know from men and women who have lost loved ones that these devices are part of the attacks too often.

Bill Sherlach, the husband of Mary Sherlach, who has come to Washington this week to speak out against gun violence, had this to say about high-capacity magazines. And his wife Mary is with us in this picture today.

It's just simple arithmetic. If you have to change magazines 15 times instead of five times, you have three times as many incidents as where something could jam, something could be bobbled. You just increase the time for intervention. You increase the timeframe where kids can get out. And there's 11 kids out there today that are still running around on the playground pretty much now at lunchtime.

Another Sandy Hook family member who is with us today, Nicole Hockley, mother of Dylan Hockley, said the following:

[W]e looked at the search warrants . . . and know that [the shooter] left the smaller capacity magazines at home. That was a choice that the shooter made. He knew that the larger capacity magazines were more lethal.

The fact is that Adam Lanza had smaller capacity magazines that were found in his home at the time a search was conducted. He left those behind. He used the 30-round clips. He brought with him three 30-round magazines for that AR–15 because he knew he could fire more bullets more rapidly, more lethally, with a 30-round clip. David Wheeler, who is also here today and is the father of Benjamin Andrew Wheeler, said the following:

The more bullets you can get out the end of that gun in the least amount of time, that is the single area that I believe affects lethality. And the size of the magazine placed in that weapon is a direct contributor to that—a direct contributor to that factor. There is a place for 30-round magazines, in the military, on the battlefield.

The families of Sandy Hook have shown tremendous courage and strength. Their resolve and resoluteness are an inspiration and a source of strength to all of us who have spent time with them, who have come to know them, the privilege of knowing them. They have come here to talk about something no one would want to talk about, and they have done it so that no mother, no father, no husband, no wife ever has to again experience the unspeakable and unimaginable horror and tragedy that has befallen them. We owe it to them to vote on this measure. I'm confident there will be a vote. I'm proud to offer this measure banning high-capacity magazines to reduce the scourge of gun violence. There is no turning back, as Nicole Hockley has said so eloquently. There is no turning back from a proposal to ban high-capacity magazines.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I wish to talk about the issue of gun violence.

Our hearts are still heavy from the reminders of what happened in Connecticut, and I want to say that I come to this issue from a position of moderation and common sense. I come to this issue having grown up in the country as a hunter. I grew up on a ranch. I have had guns all my life. I am very familiar with guns. And to this day I still enjoy hunting quail and pheasant with my son. But is there anybody who realistically doesn't believe we ought to have a criminal background check for the person who is purchasing a gun?

I am very encouraged to hear that Senator MANCHIN and Senator TOOMEY have come together to find a way to close the gun show loophole. That is instructive.

In my State of Florida, years ago we amended the State constitution with an overwhelming vote of the people in Florida, and then there were ways that in practice had been found to subvert the law that was the will of the people in our State—that you can't purchase a gun at a gun show without having a

criminal background check. What they do is they say: I will consider you a personal friend, and therefore that is an exception to doing a background check on you. So Senator MANCHIN and Senator TOOMEY have come to an agreement to find a way to close that gun show loophole, and that proposal will also establish a commission to better understand the root causes of how to prevent mass violence.

There is simply no reason we shouldn't be able to do a criminal background check, which is one way to find out the intention of somebody who is buying a gun. If you bring it back to basics, it is all about common sense, and it is especially so given the circumstances in which we find ourselves where people are slaughtering children.

Is there anybody who thinks we need ammunition clips for 60 rounds? That is not common sense. When I go hunting, if it is quail, I usually have two shotgun shells in the gun. If you are going to give the quail a chance and if it is hunting instead of killing, then let's see how good a marksman you are. So I can't see any reason that common sense would dictate that we would have more than 10 rounds in a clip. Yet people want to go out and buy clips for 60 rounds. I think that is telling us something about their intention. I voted on this back in 2004, to extend the existing law that came out of the 1990s. We said in that legislation that 10 and fewer is OK. Now, is that not reasonable? Is that not common sense? So if we don't reasonably have a need for more than 10, then that is where we ought to draw it in the law.

Then there is another element of common sense; that is, why assault weapons? I served, wearing the uniform of this country. The U.S. military has assault weapons. People are going out and buying these AK–47s that are a derivative of the same weapon that was used by the North Vietnamese against us in the Vietnam war. And I simply ask this question: Are these guns for hunting or are they for killing? And if the legitimate answer is that they are not for hunting or for some collector's purposes, then they have another purpose. Obviously, that is what they were designed for—as an assault-type weapon in a combat circumstance.

So how do we approach the legitimate recognition of the second amendment, the right to bear arms, with assault weapons? And I don't think we can. It seems that among people of good will, using common sense and moderation, that we can come to some definitions that would ban these types of assault weapons. Now, we are probably not going to have the votes to pass it here, but we need to take the vote and we need to see how everybody feels about this issue.

I wish to conclude by saying that those of us who are portrayed, by taking this position of moderation and common sense, as if we were not for the second amendment, that is false. Of course I support the second amendment. I just gave you my history of growing up in the country with guns, having guns all my life and still having a number of guns in my home today. I support the second amendment. I do so in light of the circumstances in our society today that have changed.

My final comment is that in all of this it is moderation and common sense that are so much the solution to facing the issues that confront us today, and here is another example. Let's use a little common sense.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Florida for those very thoughtful remarks and, of course, my colleague, the senior Senator from Connecticut.

We are here on the floor today to help lead a discussion about how this Nation can finally own up to its responsibility to take on the scourge of gun violence that has certainly been highlighted by the massacre in Sandy Hook that I spoke about earlier today in my first speech before this Chamber. But it has, frankly, become too routine throughout the streets of this country, with 3,000 to 4,000 people having lost their lives to gun violence since Sandy Hook happened.

Lost in a lot of the debate here about the particular policy prescriptions we are talking about, whether it be universal background checks supported by 90 percent of Americans or a ban on high-capacity magazines supported by two-thirds of Americans or a Federal law ending illegal gun trafficking supported by three-fourths of Americans, lost amidst all of the political back-and-forth over negotiations between Republicans and Democrats and the pronouncements of the NRA and of gun control groups, lost amidst all of that debate about politics and policy are the victims. The victims are the people—boys and girls, men and women, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters—who die every single day in this country. I described it this morning—like raindrops. It is just background noise to this country now, the number of people who are dying every day.

I decided after having given my maiden speech this morning that I would come back to this floor—not to occupy the floor or commandeer the floor, but to the extent that there is time today and tomorrow and next week, to spend time on this floor telling the stories of the victims, telling the stories of the individual people whose lives were tragically cut short by guns—because it happens here more so than almost every other nation in the world. More people lose their lives, more people have their lives ended prematurely because of guns here than almost any other corner of the world.

It is time that we do something about it. Yes because of the aggregate numbers, yes because of the horror in Sandy Hook, but also because every single additional life that is cut short is a failure of our responsibility to do something about it. So I am going to spend some time down on the Senate floor in between others giving speeches today and tomorrow and next week to talk about these victims, to just tell you a little bit about who they are—especially for the little ones, maybe who they were going to be.

Let me start in Newtown. Let me start in Sandy Hook. We can put up some pictures of just a handful of the victims from Sandy Hook and from cities across this country. Let me start with the little guy in the middle, Daniel Barden. I talked about him this morning.

Daniel was a pretty amazing little boy. His parents talked about the unbelievable compassion he had. I talked about it this morning. He never failed to turn off a light when he left a room. He was always the kid in school who was sitting with the kid who did not have anybody to sit with. When his parents would leave a grocery store they would get halfway across the grocery store parking lot, turn around, and Daniel wasn't with them because he was still holding the door open for other people who were leaving the store. He was a pretty amazing little kid. He loved to spend time with his family. He loved riding the waves at the beach. You can see with that long hair he was a beach bum.

He played drums in a band with his brother James and sister Natalie. His family is very musical, so on that morning his father, who is a professional musician—he is here this week, actually—taught him how to play Jingle Bells.

He woke up very early that morning. It was funny because he was the last of the three kids to go to school. They were all in separate schools. His parents thought it was strange that on that morning he woke up early. In fact it was the first day all year—this was December 14, so they had been in school for months—it was the first day in the entire year that Daniel had awaken before his oldest sibling went to school.

As the oldest sibling was walking down the driveway to go to school, Daniel ran after him to tell him that he loved him. The first time, he had never done that all year. It just shows what a compassionate little kid Daniel was. I actually wear a bracelet for Daniel. It is a bracelet that links to a Facebook page called ''What Would Daniel Do?'' It has 16,000 ''likes.'' The point of this page is people can hear about a lot of these kids. The families have done a lot of amazing things to try to spread the word about who these kids were and what they were going to be. Daniel's page is, ''What Would Daniel Do?'' It is a forum for people to invest in little acts of kindness to try to live up to the inspiration this little 6-year-old set for his family and his neighborhood.

So people posted stories on that Web site for the last several months about

these little kind acts they performed: For example, the woman who bought coffee and donuts for a firehouse in her home State of New York, the Missouri woman who helped restock a food pantry in Daniel's honor, the Illinois woman who paid for a stranger's meal and on the back of the bill wrote: ''Love, from Daniel Barden.''

Daniel was going to grow up to be an amazing young man. He loved life. He did amazing things for people. But we did not get to know Daniel Barden later in life because he was gunned down that day in Sandy Hook.

Let me tell the story of someone equally amazing whom we got to know for 20 more years than the kids that she was charged with looking after. Her name is one that you might know, and that is Victoria Soto. Victoria Soto was 27 years old. She was a teacher at Sandy Hook Elementary School. That is what she wanted to do. She had wanted to be a teacher, her mom said, since she was 3 years old. Imagine knowing what you want to do when you are 3 years old and sticking with it. A lot of people think they know what they want to do when they are 3, but they change their minds. She did not. She worked every day from the time she was 13 to get ready to be a teacher. As early as 13 she was charting out her classes so she could ultimately be a teacher. Even when she got to Sandy Hook Elementary School she made time for night classes at Southern Connecticut State University where she was getting her master's degree in special education.

A mentor of hers said she was the last one who would have wanted hero status, but nobody was surprised to hear what she did in that classroom that day. When Adam Lanza walked into her classroom, Victoria Soto was the only person he saw. Why? Because she had ushered her special education teacher, Anne Marie Murphy, and several of her kids under a desk. She had pushed a number of other kids into a closet to hide them. Lanza came into the classroom, he faced her and killed her. Then he killed the kids who were under the desk. The kids who hid in the closet, many of them lived. Many of them survived—they were discovered after the incident—because of the heroic actions of this one 27-year-old teacher.

Imagine what she could have done with the rest of her life. Students loved her. Parents loved her. She was made for teaching. Think of all of the impact. She probably had 30 more years in the classroom. She had hundreds if not thousands of kids she still could have touched with her life—gone. Victoria Soto's genius as a teacher will no longer be able to be realized because of what happened that day.

If we do not do something about it, Victoria Soto will not be the last teacher who is going to be gunned down. If we don't take some steps here this will not be the last selfless educator we will mourn on the Senate floor.

Let me tell a little about Charlotte Bacon, 6 years old. I lost count of the number of funerals and wakes that I went to, but I do remember Charlotte's funeral. She had this crazy head of curly red hair. She was described by her family as sweet and outgoing and exuberant, someone who was willing to argue for whatever she believed in, even at 6 years old. She loved the color pink, and she loved animals—any animal she met—but she really loved her golden retriever. She wanted to become a veterinarian. A lot of these kids we will hear about today knew what they wanted to do with their lives. These were ambitious kids, in part because they had special parents as well.

She was really looking forward to Christmas because she wanted to show off this new pink dress and pink boots she had gotten. It was a Christmas outfit, so she was waiting until Christmas to be able to show it off. But on the morning of December 14—again, another theme we will hear is that these strange things happened that morning—that morning she woke up and she wanted to wear that pink dress. She wanted to wear those pink boots, and her mother let her do it. She wore that special pink dress and those boots to school on Friday, December 14.

Her family has established a nonprofit called Newtown Kindness. The organization is comprised of community members who were trying to bring positivity and strength back to the Newtown community. I talked this morning about the fact that for many of us who have lived through this tragedy—not anywhere close to the way in which the victims' families have—but what we see Newtown defined by is not the 10 minutes of violence and evil, but all the millions of acts of humanity that have spilled forth from inside the community and from outside the community in the days and weeks since, and this is what Newtown Kindness is about. It is encouraging children to do their own acts of kindness like Charlotte did and submit their stories through drawings and letters to the organization. Newtown Kindness is going to show some light on all these little wonderful things that kids do every day in the same way that Charlotte did for the kids she loved and the family members she loved and for the animals she loved.

Let me talk a little bit about another teacher, Rachel Davino. Rachel was very much like Victoria, in that she knew she wanted to work with kids. She had a lot of interests, Rachel Davino did. She was born in Waterbury, received her undergraduate degree from Hartford, she got her masters from Post University. She loved animals. That is probably why she connected with a lot of these kids. She loved baking and photography and karate. She drew lots of things, loved to draw animals—dogs, frogs, anything with scales or feathers or fur she loved to draw. But her passion was working as a behavioral therapist, working with kids with autism. There were a number of kids in these classrooms who had autism. They were doing great because of the work of people like Rachel and Anne Marie Murphy, who reached out to work with these kids.

Rachel was exceptional because she integrated these kids into her daily life. She brought the kids to her home. She involved the kids in her family. She treated the kids like family and they matured. They did better under her care.

She probably didn't know it when she died, but her best friend and her boyfriend, Tony, was about to propose to her. In fact he had already gone to her parents to ask permission to ask to marry her. He was going to do it on Christmas Eve, just 10 days after the incident. He didn't get to ask for Rachel's hand in marriage. Instead, the wedding ring he had planned to present to her was placed on her finger before she was buried.

Rachel was an amazing teacher, an amazing person who invested herself in these kids, day in and day out. It would have been great to know what Rachel Davino would have become as she matured as an educator.

This is just a sampling of the stories from 1 day in Newtown, CT. Fewer kids and adults died in Newtown that day than die every day across this country. We think how exceptional it was and how awful and how horrific that we lost 20 kids and 6 adults—and, by the way, 2 others in Adam Lanza and his mother—yet that number is less than the average number of people who are killed every day by gun violence across this country. So I want to talk about them too. I want to talk about just over the last couple of weeks and months what we have witnessed across this country.

I want to talk about Hadiya Pendleton in Chicago. We have heard a lot about her because she was here for the Presidential inauguration. She was performing with her school's majorette team in the President's inauguration festivities. She loved performing. She was an honor student at King College Prep High School in Chicago. She was 15 years old.

She is remembered by her friends as somebody who was always raising her hand in class. She had all the right answers in that chemistry class. She wore bright lip gloss that made her stand out. She loved to dance. She danced on the Praise Dance Ministry in her church, and she was a member of her cheerleading team as well. She liked Chinese food, she loved Fig Newtons. She was thinking about going to college, thinking about either journalism or pharmacology, two pretty different things. Either way, she wanted to go to Harvard. She knew where she wanted to go.

She was 15 years old. She was shot and killed while standing with her friends in a park in Chicago after she took her final exams, just days after she came back from Washington, DC,

probably one of the most amazing experiences in her life.

I watched some of that parade, and I always think to myself whether I saw her performing with her majorette team. She was 15 years old. She was going to go to Harvard. She was going to become a journalist or a great dancer. All the things we missed just because she was standing in the way of a bullet at a park with her friends after she took her final exams.

I think about Lavanial Williams, who in January of this year, was visiting with his mother and two sisters in Marin City, CA, to celebrate his 17th birthday. He was checking in on his sister April to make sure she was fine because there was some suspicious activity going on in the housing complex that day. He went downstairs to check out the commotion, and moments later he was shot dead just because he walked down some stairs to check out some commotion.

The deputies who arrived on the scene found a group of people trying to revive the teenager by CPR, but he was pronounced dead at the scene. He had been hit by several bullets. He was there visiting his mother and two sisters to celebrate his 17th birthday. Lavanial Williams died on January 11, 2013.

If we talk about the connection to the background checks piece of this discussion, we could talk about Annemarie Bautch. She returned home after dropping off her kids at school on April 8—just a week or so ago—in Milwaukee. Her live-in boyfriend pulled in behind her in a taxicab he drove for hire. He walked to her van's window and shot her in the head. He then took his gun and turned it on himself.

He was on probation for recent domestic violence incidences involving his daughter. He had beaten up his daughter. He had firearms arrests going back 20 years. He was a convicted felon, and he was prohibited from carrying weapons. I don't have in front of me why he had the weapon that day or how he got it, but he was not supposed to have it. He had a long rap sheet when it came to convictions regarding firearms.

He was ordered to undergo anger management training after his most recent conviction, but it is unclear as to whether that ever happened. He is not here to answer those questions and neither is his girlfriend Annmarie who died that day at the age of 39 after dropping her kids off at school.

Earlier this week in Akron, OH, there was a 28-year-old man who was fatally shot while taking garbage to a trash bin in the parking lot of a McDonald's restaurant at which he worked. He was taking garbage to a trash dump and he was shot and died. His name has not been released, but he had been working at that McDonald's for 10 years. His coworkers said: ''He was the kind of person who would give you his last dollar.'' He would give his coworkers gifts on holidays—Christmas and Thanksgiving. He worked in McDonald's. He could not have had a lot of money to go out and buy gifts for coworkers. He worked at that place for a decade. Because of his generous nature with whatever money he had, that he scraped together, he made sure people knew he loved them.

He was 28 years old when he died earlier this week in Akron, OH.

This stuff is happening every day. I mean, I will keep on going through them, but this is happening every day throughout this country. People are dying on our streets by casual gun violence while bringing garbage to a dumpster outside a McDonald's, walking down the stairs to check out some commotion at a sister's housing complex, and pulling into a driveway after dropping their kids off at school. These were not people who were going out and looking for trouble. These were people who were just doing their regular everyday business.

President Obama came to Connecticut on Monday, and he told the story of a mother who was so frustrated at the phrase regarding her daughter's death due to gun violence that her daughter was ''in the wrong place at the wrong time.'' She just happened to be in the way of a stray bullet. Her mother's point was, no; she was in the right place at the right time. She was walking to school.

This guy was bringing garbage to the dumpster. Anne Marie was coming home after dropping off her kids. Lavanial was just looking out for his sister. They were not in the wrong place at the wrong time, they were doing what they were supposed to be doing. Yet they were gunned down. We have no answer? After 20 years of this, we are not able to step up and do something about it? It is like raindrops. It has just become routine.

Let me go back to Newtown and talk more about these kids. Olivia Rose Engel was a bright-eyed, brunette, 6-year-old girl. She loved school. She particularly loved reading and math, which is good because a lot of what first graders do is reading and math. If you love reading and math, you are probably in good shape.

Her favorite stuffed animal was a lamb, and her favorite colors were—a theme we will hear often—pink and purple. She was set to play an angel in her church's nativity play on the night of the tragedy. She laughed a lot, and her parents said she just lit up a room when she walked in.

Olivia played soccer and tennis, and she took art classes. She loved swimming and ballet classes, and she took hip-hop dance lessons. She was also involved in her Daisy Girl Scouts. Every night when they gathered for dinner, her family would have Olivia say grace.

She was a great big sister. Olivia really loved her little 3-year-old brother Brayden. She was killed that day in Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Josephine Gay celebrated her seventh birthday just 3 days before the tragedy. Joey is what she was called by her family. She was a kid with an indomitable spirit. She was autistic, as were a handful of these kids, but she was still social. She was very affectionate. She was getting very good care from some of these paraprofessionals who were there.

She grew up—actually not too far from here—in Maryland with a house full of Ravens fans. Josephine fell in love with the color purple. I don't know if she bought into the Ravens as a team yet, but she loved the color purple. She had a great sense of humor; she smiled all the time.

She loved hugs even though she participated in rigorous therapy for her disability. She had treatment on a daily basis. She did it without complaining. She loved her Barbie dolls, her iPad, and her computer. She loved to sing and swim and be anywhere her sisters were. Joey Gay was killed that day at age 7 in Sandy Hook Elementary School.

I want to talk about Avielle Richman. I have gotten to know Avielle's parents pretty well over the course of the last few months. Frankly, I have gotten to know a lot of these families over the last few months.

Avielle's parents have done something remarkable, which I will mention, but first I will talk about Avielle.

Guess what color Avielle loved. She loved the color pink. She loved to wear her pink cowboy boots and adored riding her pony Betty. She turned 6 years old just about 2 months before the tragedy.

She moved from Connecticut a few years ago from San Diego. She loved San Diego. She was barefoot all the time. She would run on the beaches of San Diego until the Sun went down. Her relatives used to joke about how hard it was to get shoes on Avielle even after moving to Connecticut. When she lived in San Diego, she never used to wear shoes, so she certainly was not going to wear them even in a colder climate like Connecticut.

She had curly brown hair and an infectious smile. Her parents kept a blog about her. They called her their little hummingbird. She loved horseback riding, swimming, ice skating, and superhero adventures. She loved pretending to be a superhero. She loved the movie ''Brave,'' and Avielle tried out archery, which is a brave thing for her parents to do as well. She tried out archery because of her love for the movie.

Before her life was taken that December, Avielle was obsessed with an Easy Bake Oven she was hoping to get for Christmas.

Her parents are scientists, and in the wake of Avielle's death, they started a nonprofit to raise money to try to get to the root cause of the illness that caused someone like Adam Lanza to pick up a gun. That is an amazing thing for the Richmans to do. I talked about a number of efforts that have been taken, whether it is a Facebook

page for Daniel Barden, a Web site to try to encourage kids to engage in acts of kindness, or what Avielle's parents did. This is an amazing thing for them to do. While they are grieving, they are trying to find a silver lining in all of this.

The Richmans' hope is that they can use the memory of their precious 6-year-old daughter to go out and raise money to try to research the causes of the illness that led to this tragedy. It is an illness. We talk about it in terms of evil, and I have certainly used that term. It is really illness masquerading as evil.

The Richmans are going to do their part to raise money to try to do a better job to figure out what is going on in the brain to cause someone to leave their parents' home, drive to an elementary school, and start shooting, or walk up to a McDonald's employee as they are delivering garbage to the dumpster and shoot them. It is a different kind of illness, I suppose, but it deserves examination nonetheless.

The Richmans are heroic in the fact that they have decided to reach out and try to make this discovery.

Another teacher to talk about is Lauren Rousseau. She wanted to be a teacher so badly. She was 30 years old. Up to the point she was hired as a full-time substitute teacher at Sandy Hook Elementary, she spent 6 years working at part-time jobs just to make ends meet so she could substitute teach during the day. During that 6-year period of time, she was looking for a full-time job, and she finally found it. That October she had been hired in Newtown to be a full-time substitute teacher. It is just what Lauren wanted to do, and she was really good at it. She was literally on the verge of realizing that 6-year dream when her life was taken.

She was very bubbly and outgoing. She spent the morning of December 14 looking forward to a movie she was going to see that night with her friends and her boyfriend, ''The Hobbit.'' She was a huge fan of Tolkien, so it was a big deal to see ''The Hobbit'' that evening, and that is what she was talking about that morning.

She loved animals too. She was passionate about doing something about child poverty. Part of the reason she went into education was she believed she needed to live her life in a way that was going to reach out and eradicate the scourge of child poverty.

Purple was her favorite color, and so everybody at her funeral wore the color purple.

She was a huge UConn basketball fan. In particular, she was a big fan of the UConn women's basketball team. So if Lauren is looking down from up above, she is very happy because her UConn women are national champions again. She would have been watching that game last night, and hopefully she was.

Lauren Rousseau was right there. Her dream was within her grasp, what she had worked for all of her life, and in an instant it was gone.

Teachers, little girls, and little boys who could have been great people, great educators—they could have been dancers and singers. Daniel Barden said he wanted to be a paleontologist just like his older brother. He could have done great things, but he is gone.

This isn't the first massacre we have seen. Daniel Barden and Ana Marquez-Green and Dylan Hockley and Benjamin Wheeler—these are all kids who were killed in Newtown, CT, but unfortunately Newtown is just the latest in a line of mass shootings. Forty percent of the mass shootings that have happened in this Nation's history have happened since the assault weapons ban expired. Forty percent of all of the mass shootings in this Nation's history have happened in the last 8 years—8 years—since the assault weapons ban expired. I am not an expert in cause and correlation, but that cannot be a coincidence. It can't be a coincidence because we also know that during those 10 years of the assault weapons ban, along with a ban on high-capacity magazines that was in effect, we saw a 37-percent decrease in gun violence. We saw a two-thirds decrease in the crimes committed with assault weapons. Those are real numbers, real reductions in overall gun violence and in gun violence perpetrated with these dangerous assault weapons. But the minute that ban was lifted, a dramatic increase in these mass shootings occurred.

Newtown was the second worst school shooting. It is seared in our memories in a different way because these were precious, young, little kids, and we can't help but grieve in a fundamentally different way for 6- and 7-year-olds. But Virginia Tech was worse. Still to this day, Virginia Tech saw the highest number of people gunned down. So I wish to talk about a few of those people.

Ross Alameddine was a Virginia Tech sophomore. He loved computer games, and he actually played a lot of them competitively. He was very much into home computer repair, and it was something he wanted to do with his life. His customers always loved him because they would bring their computers to him and he was one of the few people who knew how to fix them.

He did a lot of stuff outside of his fascination with computers. He loved rollerblading, whether it was in between classes or going out for long rollerblading expeditions on nice days. He loved movies, and he loved music. He played the piano, and he actually sang at a local coffeehouse. He had a fondness for language. He had strong opinions too. He was part of the debate club at Austin Prep, where he went to school. He talked in every single one of these classes. We know these kids who always have something to say, and Ross was definitely one of them.

He loved life. He sought to make other people laugh. He used his music to do that. One of his classmates, Liz Hardwick, remembered his many qualities. She said that Ross's wit, humor, and insightfulness made him so much fun to be around, but his caring for others was also always present. Ross was one of the 32 victims killed during the Virginia Tech massacre on April 16, 2007.

Christopher James Bishop—''Jamie'' Bishop—was a German teacher who was shot at the age of 35. He was a dedicated husband and son. He was a gentle colleague. He was a really generous friend.

He had a long ponytail that he wore. That was kind of Jamie's signature. But he didn't keep the ponytail for long because once he grew it, he would regularly cut his hair and donate it to Locks of Love. He was doing it for style reasons, I am sure, but he saw his ponytail as a means to donate to other people who needed some help.

He was another techno guru. He knew a lot about complicated gadgets, and one of those was cameras. He was a great technician with a camera, but he was also a very avid photographer. Jamie leaves behind a lot of wonderful art that captured the intensity and the beauty that surrounded him in Blacksburg.

He hailed from a very small town—Pine Mountain, GA—and he was a big fan of the Atlanta Braves, so he would probably be pretty excited about the start the Atlanta Braves have had this year.

He was a foreign language teacher. He was a tough teacher—''Herr Bishop'' is what they called him—but he really believed that understanding language was a way for people to engage in the world. It was a joy, but it was really fundamental to understanding humanity. If people understand languages, they understand different cultures and they understand something more about what it means to be a human being in this world. Jamie believed in what he did not just because he wanted to teach kids German but because he wanted to teach kids about the world. He died at Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007, at the age of 35.

Brian Bluhm was a graduate student. He was a TA at Virginia Tech. He cared about water resources—something we actually are going to be talking about here pretty soon—something not a lot of graduate students think about. He cared deeply about a just distribution of water assets across the country, and that is what he was working on at Virginia Tech.

But his real love was for God. He was dedicated to building a relationship through his church with his God.

He was one of the friendliest guys one could ever meet, his friends said. He had a smile for everybody.

He was a big sports fan. Brian grew up with a passion for sports, particularly baseball, and his favorite team was the Detroit Tigers. He was one of these guys who follow everything about their favorite team. He watched all the games, but when the Tigers weren't playing in the winter and in

the early spring, he would be analyzing every statistic from the past season and getting ready for the next season. He also loved Virginia Tech sports, especially football and basketball. He was one of those people others would see on TV who came to all of the games with the colors on their chests to show their support.

His family says he will be remembered for his love of God, family, friends, the Detroit Tigers, and Virginia Tech. He was lost that day, April 16, 2007, as well.

Ryan Christopher Clark was known to his friends as ''Stack.'' He maintained a 4.0 GPA when he was a student at Virginia Tech, and he was a kid who had a mastery of science. He had a triple major. I didn't even know one could have a triple major, but Stack had a triple major in psychology, biology, and English. Can my colleagues imagine what Stack was going to be able to do with his life? Can we imagine what he would have been able to contribute in his life with a triple major?

He was a leader on campus. He played baritone in the Marching Virginians university band, and he was a resident adviser. So he was doing great things on campus and passing along a lot of knowledge to kids underneath him.

His friends said: He was a wonderful part of our baritone section. He was fun. He was loving. He was a delightful person to be around. He cared so much for other people. He would befriend anyone. He was a light and he was a joy.

Ryan Christopher Clark was going to do great things with his life. He was a student leader. At his young age, he had already shown a compassion for his fellow students by being a resident adviser. He had shown a talent for music by going out and performing in the band, and he was a triple major who was probably going to do something great in the scientific field in this country. But Stack didn't get to live that dream because, along with so many others, he was gunned down that day at Virginia Tech.

Virginia Tech, Newtown, Aurora, Tucson—these are just the mass shootings. I will keep on going, but these victims just don't end. Stack on top of that 40, 50, 60 people every day being killed on our streets. It is important to talk about these victims. That is why I wanted to come to the floor today to do this, because if we don't do something in the next 2 weeks, these lists are going to grow.

The illegal guns used on the streets of Chicago and Bridgeport and New Haven and Washington, DC, and New York weren't always illegal guns. They were legal guns before they became illegal guns. Somewhere along the line, their status transferred. The question is, What can we do to stop that transfer from happening?

I believe in the second amendment. I believe in the protection that it affords people to own a gun, to be able to hunt or to shoot for sport or to protect themselves. But I want to make sure guns stay in the ''legal'' category and don't leach into the ''illegal'' category. That is why 90 percent of Americans think we should have a law in this Nation that provides for universal, mandatory background checks for everybody who buys a gun. That is a really simple thing to do.

This is just a sampling of the lives that could have been protected. The gun used in Newtown went through a background check, but so many of the guns used to kill boys and girls and young adults and men and women in our cities don't go through background checks. We think about 40 percent of guns sold across this country don't go through background checks.

One of the tragedies in this long line is directly relevant to this bill. At Columbine High School, the gun used was bought outside of the background check system, and the friend of the shooter's who bought the gun said after the incident that the reason she bought it with the method she did was because had she gone to a gun store, it wouldn't have passed the background check. That is the gun show loophole. What has it been—a decade-plus since Columbine, and we still haven't closed the gun show loophole? We still haven't made the collective decision that we should make sure criminals don't buy guns? She said she couldn't have bought the gun if she went to a licensed gun dealer because it would have been prohibited. So a bunch of kids died at Columbine High School.

Someone could make the argument that if the gun hadn't gotten in their hands that way, it might have gotten in their hands another way. I get it. Nothing we are talking about guarantees that another Sandy Hook isn't going to happen, and it certainly can't guarantee that our streets are going to all of a sudden be safer overnight. But if we make it a little bit harder to get that gun, if we make it a little bit more difficult for a criminal to get his hands on a weapon, the chances look a whole lot better to survive on the streets of our cities or in our schools and mosques and movie theaters.

As Senator BLUMENTHAL pointed out, I can absolutely make the case that if we had stronger laws on the books today, Newtown may not have happened, and even if it did happen, some of these kids would be alive today.

What happened in one of those classrooms is instructive. A handful of kids survived because Victoria Soto put them into a closet, and when the shooting was over, they were discovered in that closet.

Another set of kids survived a different way. When Lanza went to switch magazines, there was a delay in the shooting and a bunch of kids ran out of the classroom. Five of them—six were found in the closet, and five of them ran out of the classroom when Lanza decided to switch magazine clips. There are five kids who don't look much different from Ana and Daniel and Dylan and Benjamin who are—and Jesse, there is Jesse—who are alive today because Adam Lanza had to switch clips. He only had to do it about 6 times to get off 154 bullets. We don't exactly understand why, but he didn't actually discharge all of his 30-round clips. Sometimes he only shot about 10 or 15 bullets before he switched, but some of them he went straight through. He only had to switch clips we think about 6 times to get off 154 bullets in 10 minutes.

If we had on the books today a law such as the law we had back in the 1990s and early 2000s that restricted ammunition clips to 10 rounds—an amendment Senator BLUMENTHAL and I will bring to the floor next week, either an amendment or in a separate bill—that shooter would have had to change ammunition clips 15 times—9 more opportunities for kids to run out of the classroom. I know we can't guarantee that things would have been different, but let me tell my colleagues there are an awful lot of parents in Newtown who believe their sons or daughters might likely be alive today had we continued to have a restriction limiting ammunition clips to 10 rounds.

What we know is that in Tucson, people would be alive today because that incident absolutely stopped when the shooter switched clips. It was during the transfer of ammunition magazines that he was tackled. We know that if he had 10 rounds rather than a higher number, there would still be people alive there.

We know what happened in the movie theater in Aurora. That guy walked into the movie theater with a 100-round drum. What on Earth is the reason why somebody needs a 100-round drum? It jammed because these guys are amateurs. They have not done this before. People say: It is not going to make a difference—10 rounds, 30 rounds—because it takes 3 seconds to switch clips, so it is not going to provide any different outcome.

For a professional shooter, it takes 3 seconds. But for a nervous 21-year-old kid, hyped up on adrenaline, it is a different thing. Five kids escaped in Newtown; the shooting stopped in Tucson; the shooting stopped when the gun jammed upon exchange of magazines in Aurora. People are alive today because there is something that happens when you have to exchange magazines in these incidents of mass violence. More exchanges of magazines mean more kids alive today.

Let me talk to you about Porshe Foster. She was 15 years old when she was killed over the Thanksgiving holiday last year in Chicago. She had five sisters—six daughters, and Porshe was the youngest of them. Porshe was 15, and she was shot in the back of the head when she was standing with her best friends in a backyard during a sleepover.

The intended victim was a gang-related individual. They were targeting

somebody else, but she got hit. Twenty-five shots were fired, by the way. Twenty-five shots were fired. Porshe was the only victim that was hit.

She was a sophomore at ACE Tech. It is a charter school that specializes in getting kids ready for college in architecture and construction and engineering. This is exactly the kind of student we wanted, where, on the floor of the Senate and the House of Representatives, we are all the time clamoring for more girls to go into STEM education—into science, technology, engineering, and math. Porshe was doing it. She was living up to our expectations. She was going to a charter school. It was going to get her ready to go into a career in architecture, construction or engineering. Imagine what she could have done if she lived beyond the age of 15.

She played volleyball and she played basketball. She sang in the church choir. She loved art. Her classmates actually honored her death by holding an art sale in her memory. Because funerals are expensive, especially in inner-city Chicago, they used the proceeds from the art sale to pay for Porshe's funeral.

Let me tell you, that is no small expense. We do not think about that, but one of the biggest issues in Hartford, CT, today—a city that has had relatively low gun violence this year but on an average year can have a couple dozen gun deaths—is how do you pay for the funerals, how do you come up with the money as a community to pay for a funeral every other week in a small, little city such as Hartford. Porshe's friends decided to do an art sale to pay for her funeral.

Her family and friends remember her as happy, as friendly, as a great student, always busy, someone ''you couldn't be quiet around.''

Her five sisters had planned to give their youngest sister a guitar for Christmas. She was killed on November 26, 2012, about a month before she was going to get that guitar.

I know there are other people who are here to speak, and so I will yield the floor at this time. But I will be back today and tomorrow to talk about more victims. I just think we need to tell their stories. I just think the people need to know who these people are because there are going to be more of them if things do not change, and we have the power this week and next week to do something about it—not to eliminate future victims. We are never, ever going to change the fact that people are going to pick up a gun, are going to violate the law, are going to shoot to kill. We are never going to stop that. But we can do something to reduce these numbers so next year at this time or 2 years at this time we cannot come down to the floor with a binder full of victims just from the past 3 months.

I will be back later today and tomorrow to continue to do this, but at this time I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized as in morning business for 10 minutes.

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

Mr. INHOFE. First of all, Madam President, let me say, I certainly sympathize with the tragedy that took place and those who lost family members. Having 20 kids and grandkids myself, I am probably in a better position to sympathize with that than many others are.

I have to say I think somewhat of a disservice is being done to some of these families. It is almost akin to saying we are looking at legislation that would have prevented that from happening—and that is not the case—or we are looking at legislation that would preclude something such as this happening again.

I listened to my colleagues on the right side, on the Republican side, and on the left, the Democratic side, and they all have good ideas and they all are sincere in wanting to do something and maybe I am looking at it too simplistically. Because I look at the second amendment, I look at what historically has been our privilege in exercising our right to keep and bear arms—I mean since the very beginning—then I see and I have lived through, on the State and on the Federal level, all kinds of efforts of people to think: We can do something about gun violence, and let's do it by background checks, let's check everybody out there, let's do it, and let's approach the gun shows.

Let's talk about all these things that could be done. We could restrict the number of the cartridges and the magazines and all these things, but it is all predicated on one assumption, which I cannot buy. That assumption is that somehow we think that the criminal element will single out this one law to comply with.

Let's look at the facts. When we look at what they are trying to do, anything that is up that we are going to be voting on in the next 2 or 3 weeks—however long it takes—is going to, in some way, restrict the number of firearms. I think we would all agree with that. Whose firearms will they restrict? They would restrict the firearms of law-abiding citizens. That means the ratio between guns owned by the criminal element versus the law-abiding citizen is going to change.

When they talk about the background checks, I cannot imagine anyone being so naive as not to know that if the criminal element is going to get a gun, they are going to get a gun. Sure, they would kind of like to have some of these restrictions. They would like to have that background check because that eliminates the numbers of guns in circulation. So the criminal element is the only one who is not affected.

I was asked a question not long ago about this. It was on a national TV show. I was actually down at the border at the time, the Mexican border. They asked the question: Why is America so wrong? He talked about a poll that was taken where the results were 90 to 3. The question that was asked was: Do you believe we ought to have stronger background checks?

I said: Fine. If you were to ask that same question—90 percent of the people, by the way, answered: Yes, we need to have stronger background checks. But if you asked the question: Do you believe we should have stronger background checks on the law-abiding citizens and not the criminal element, then I can assure you, it would be like 99 to nothing the other way.

That is the thing. That is the one thing people just overlook. We can pass all the laws we want, and the criminal element is going to sit back and smile. Is anyone naive enough not to think, not to believe that regardless of background checks, a criminal element can find someone who can go and get a gun, make $100, and they have a gun. But the ratio changes and not in a healthy way.

In a way I think it is a disservice to an awful lot of people who have had tragedies in their lives to believe we are doing something that is truly going to change that when, in fact, I do not believe it is.

With that, I yield the floor and 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. MURPHY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I rise again to continue my attempt on the floor of the Senate today, without holding up the Senate or allowing others to speak their mind, to really draw attention to the names, faces, and reality behind this chart. This is probably difficult to see for some of my colleagues because it represents the over 3,300 people who have died since December 14, since the Newtown tragedy. Over 3,300 people have died from gun violence since December 14 and are represented by all of these individual figurines, which are so many that the picture becomes muddled. It almost looks like lines going back and forth. Behind each one of those small, tiny figurines is a story of a man, woman, little boy, or little girl who had their life stolen from them and from their family prematurely because of gun violence.

I wish there weren't enough material to fill today, tomorrow, and next week, when others aren't on the floor speaking. I wish there weren't 3,300 stories in the last several months alone with respect to people who have died from gun violence, but that is the reality.

The reality is that this Nation has become callous over time to the everyday incidents of gun violence that have happened on our streets, in my cities of Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven, and also in your cities of New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Baltimore.

We have come to believe, over the course of the last 20 years since we passed the last major gun violence initiative, through the Congress, that we can't do anything, that we are powerless. We have come to delude ourselves of that fact.

I gave my first speech on the floor of the Senate this morning, and I have been moved to come back and spend time today talking about the victims as a means to try to move us to do something. We know what we need to do because people out there have already decided what it is. Ninety percent of Americans support the universal background checks. Two-thirds of Americans support a ban on these high-capacity magazine clips. We haven't figured it out for ourselves.

I wish to speak for a few minutes about these victims. I will start these remarks with a school near Littleton, CO. Columbine High School, on the morning of April 20, 1999, was visited by two very disturbed young men who walked into the school. Their names were Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, and they opened fire in the school. They killed and injured 12 more. It was at the time certainly one of the worst instances of mass shooting in a school this country had ever seen. Of course, it has now been eclipsed by what happened at Virginia Tech and what happened in my State last December 14 at Sandy Hook Elementary School. At the time, it shocked the Nation because we didn't know how to comprehend 10 students going about their day at Columbine High School being gunned down by 2 of their fellow students. Now we are grappling with how to comprehend the deaths of 20 kids, 6- and 7-year-olds at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Although it has now been almost 14 years since the incident on April 20—we are about to come up on the anniversary—we shouldn't forget the people who were killed. Before the next Senator comes down wishing to speak, I will speak about those kids who were killed in Columbine.

Cassie Bernall was a really sweet, kind little girl. She was active in her church. Her work in her church meant so much to her that after she died her parents set up the Cassie Bernall Foundation, which provides support to youth ministries. I was a part of my youth group in my church growing up, and I know what a wonderful connection it is, both to God and to your fellow adolescents. It was a big deal for her. She also was fascinated with the United Kingdom, and she had a dream to attend Cambridge University. She wanted to become an obstetrician.

Today Cassie would be about 30 years old. She would most likely have completed her training and would be in a residency or be a practicing OB/GYN. We spend a lot of time talking about the fact that we need more preventive care doctors practicing medicine. Cassie was gunned down that day. She didn't get to live her dream or contribute to a field we know is very important.

That wasn't the only thing Cassie cared about. She loved the outdoors and spent a lot of time in Breckenridge. She had a passion for rock climbing, snowboarding, backpacking, camping, and taking photographs of everything she did so she could record her love of the outdoors.

She was buried along with a poem her mother wrote:

> Bunny Rabbit, my friend, my daughter, my mentor, I will love you and miss you forever. I promise to take good care of your kitty. I know that Jesus is elated to have you in His presence.

Cassie would have been an amazing person and was an amazing person. She was 17 years old. She hadn't yet told us exactly who she was going to be, but she was going to do great things. She was killed that day at Columbine High School.

Steven Robert Curnow was the youngest victim at Columbine. He was only 14 years old when he died. He loved his family. All of these kids loved their families, but he was especially close with his family. He was pretty close to his true passion as well—''Star Wars.'' He was 14 years old, and his parents said he watched the ''Star Wars'' movies so much he could speak every single line of the movies in sync with the actors. He was also a great athlete. He played soccer, trained very hard, and even worked locally at 14 years old as a part-time referee. He wanted to go into the Navy. He was a pretty well-rounded kid who loved ''Star Wars,'' was a great athlete, and wanted to go into the military and become a Navy pilot. He was great with young kids too. This is what his friends remember, how compassionate he was with young kids. He was 14 years old.

We already had this window into who this kid was going to be. He loved having fun and watching ''Star Wars.'' He was great with kids as a volunteer referee. He wanted to be a Navy pilot and serve our country. He never was able to do these things because he was gunned down in Columbine High School.

Corey DePooter is remembered as a really courageous kid. He was 17 years old, and he had a very strong sense of right and wrong, maybe stronger than he needed to have. When he was growing up and played cops and robbers, he refused to be the robber. He needed always to be law enforcement in that equation. He wanted to be a marine, as Steven did. Steven wanted to be a Navy pilot; Corey wanted to be a marine. After he died, he was named an honorary marine in a ceremony in front of his grave.

His friend Austin said: People said Corey was just the kind of guy you want to be around. He would always pick up our spirits in a gloomy situation.

He was on the wrestling team. He loved playing golf. He was going to serve our country. He was 17 years old, and Corey never was allowed to live out that dream.

Kelly Ann Fleming was a year younger when she died in Columbine. She was 16 years old. She was an aspiring author. At 16 years old, she had written a great deal of poetry, prose, and a lot of stories about her own life. She actually started writing her autobiography. What an amazing thing for a 16-year-old. She was writing an autobiography covering her life from age 5 until the point she died. The library was what Kelly loved. Her mom said it was her one true safe place. She felt right in that library surrounded by learning and books. Ironically, in school her favorite subject was math. Her favorite math teacher served as a pallbearer at her funeral.

Like most teenagers, she was very much looking forward to obtaining her driver's license. She wanted to get out there in a Mustang or Corvette and drive around with her friends. She was very bright and very good at math. We need more mathematicians, scientists, and engineers in this country.

Kelly Ann, who was 16 then, would be about 30 today. She was not allowed to fulfill those dreams.

This is what happened at Columbine. The two students who walked into the school and started shooting couldn't get the weapons themselves. They had a friend buy them for them. The friend knew that if they went to a gun dealership, they wouldn't get them because they wouldn't be able to pass the background check. They went outside the background check to get them a different way—a way thousands of people go to buy their weapons. The vast majority of them do this not because they are trying to get around the background check system but because in private sales, gun shows, and on the Internet, we largely don't require background checks. This is one of the things we are attempting to fix this week.

There is a belief among many of the family members of the Columbine victims that had background checks been universal, possibly the two shooters in the school might not have had those weapons. We can't guarantee that. I don't want to stand here and say that we know for certain that if we had universal background checks, Kelly Ann, Corey, Steven, Cassie, and all the rest would still be alive today. We don't know that, but chances are a little better. Those families want to have had the chance that their sons and daughters might be alive today, might have kids of their own today, might be an OB/GYN, a Navy pilot, a marine, or mathematician. They would take those chances.

So when we think about these victims, we need to think about the real

policy consequences of what we are debating, and while nothing we are talking about is going to guarantee these students who died would be alive today, boy, it gives it a much better chance it would have happened. That is just a sampling of the victims in one high school, in Columbine High School.

What we know is the names reflected by these little figurines are largely not victims of mass shootings. These are just the victims since December 14. These are folks who just got killed by a stray bullet or as a result of a crime of passion or, as I explained in an earlier speech today, just because they were taking out the trash from McDonald's or going to check out some commotion in their housing complex or driving home after dropping off kids at school. They were doing what they normally do every day. And because somebody else had a gun, legally or illegally, they got killed.

So let's talk about some of those victims as well. As I said, I am going to be down here as much as I can today, tomorrow, and next week telling these stories as a means to hopefully inspire us to some bipartisan action on the floor. I hope some good things are happening today while I am down on the Senate floor. I hope we are coming together on this issue. But if these stories don't move people, I am not sure what does.

On January 7 of last year, 2012, a 14-year-old boy in Bridgeport, CT, by the name of Justin Thompson, and his friends from Barnum Middle School went to a Sweet 16 party for a neighborhood girl on the east end of Bridgeport. Justin was a popular eighth grader. His friends and his family thought he looked exactly like Alex Rodriguez. Down in Bridgeport that is a good thing; up in the rest of Connecticut, maybe not so much.

The parents of the girl had rented a hall and hired a DJ. There was no alcohol, there was no fighting. It was just a regular Sweet 16 party. Eventually, as more kids showed up, it kind of started to get a little too big and the police had to come and break it up. But Justin left the party and began walking down a street nearby with two other young people when all of a sudden two men appeared and started shooting. Justin was hit in the head and he was killed in the commotion.

He was 14 years old. He was walking home from a Sweet 16 party. He didn't do anything wrong. He wasn't in the wrong place at the wrong time. He was in the right place at the right time. He was doing what he was supposed to be doing that night—walking home from a Sweet 16 party—and he got killed by guns. That is Justin Thompson.

Keijahnae Robinson was 15 years old when, on July 21, 2012, she was shot. She told her friends she wanted to be the next Mariah Carey. She was a big singer. She loved to sing and she loved to perform. Guess where she went on July 20 in Bridgeport, CT. She went to a Sweet 16 party as well. Her 16th birthday was actually the following week, and she was telling friends that she couldn't wait for her party. She was enjoying her friend's party but she couldn't wait for her Sweet 16 party, which was happening the following week.

After the party, her friend's mom invited some of the girls to sort of take the party to her house. It was a warm, beautiful night, and the girls were sitting out on the porch when two men came by and opened fire on the porch before driving away in a car. Two hours before she was shot, there was a robbery just down the street, and somehow this was connected to it.

She was 15 years old. She was sitting on the porch with her friends, basking in the afterglow of a wonderful Sweet 16 party, getting ready for her 16th birthday and she was gunned down by a drive-by shooting. That is Keijahnae Robinson.

Blair Belcher was 17.

This is all Bridgeport, CT. I am just giving one city in 2011 and 2012.

Blair was dreaming of one day going to college. He wanted to go into electronics and computing. He was walking through an east side park in Bridgeport on July 31—he was about to enter his senior year at Harding High School—when three shooters gunned him down in the middle of that park—a life cut short.

He was a real talent. Blair had a penchant for fixing things. He could fix anything. His mom said it was like a gift, and he wanted to do something with it when he graduated. He was 1 year away from graduating. He was 17 years old and killed in Bridgeport, CT. He was just in a park and he got gunned down in a cross fire.

It is hard to even figure out why these things happen, but they just get built into the background noise of urban gun violence.

''TJ'' Mathis was good at a lot of things in Bridgeport. Excuse me, TJ, I am sorry. TJ was from New Haven. I got to know TJ's father Lenny well. And Lenny will tell you that TJ was good at a lot of things, but basketball was at the top of the list. He was the star of Hamden High School's team. He led them to three division titles. He was all-State and he went on to play Division I basketball at Morgan State University and had just been signed to a minor league basketball contract with the ABA. He was a star. He was good at a lot of things—this was a multitalented kid—but basketball was his thing. He did well and led his team. He was going on to a career in basketball.

On a warm Saturday night in September 2011, he and his friends went to a party honoring another basketball legend—someone we are really proud of in Connecticut, Ryan Gomes of Waterbury. Ryan went to Providence College, went to the NBA and had a great career. After leaving the party, his friends realized they were too tired to drive. They were responsible. This kid had a career ahead of him. He was going to be a basketball star. He was going to the ABA, and a lot of people who go to the ABA get to the NBA.

So TJ decided he needed to get some sleep. Unfortunately, TJ never made it home that night. He pulled over to get a little sleep on the side of the road and a young man, seeing the three boys asleep on the side of the road, pulled up next to them and tried to rob them. When TJ woke up and realized he was being robbed in his car, he resisted, and the young man shot and killed him.

On the verge of a career in the ABA, a basketball standout in Hamden, CT, and at Morgan State University, just sleeping in his car trying to get a few winks before he drove home, being responsible so he didn't do something silly like get in a car while he was tired and run off the road and hurt somebody else, he gets robbed and shot.

Just part of the background noise of the people who die every day in this country—30, 40, 50, 60 a day. I will come down here today and tomorrow and next week, and I won't get through a few days' worth of shootings all across this country. The truth is a lot of these shootings in cities are happening with illegal guns.

The opponents of gun legislation are right in one respect. They are right that the majority of crimes are not committed by assault weapons. Assault weapons have become the weapon of choice for mass shooters. That is true. But the reality is these kids I am talking about—Justin and Keijahnae and Blair and TJ—were killed by hand guns, most of them illegal hand guns. Why do we have so many illegal hand guns out there? Because we haven't done anything about it here. We allow 40 percent of guns to be sold in this country without background checks.

Hopefully, we are getting closer to changing that, but we don't have a Federal law making gun trafficking illegal. People don't understand that someone can take a whole bunch of guns out of a store legally, then sell them on the street to people who are legally prohibited from purchasing guns, and they have not committed a Federal gun trafficking violation. Maybe they have committed a State violation, but they haven't committed a Federal violation.

We can't solve this problem entirely. We are not going to stop bad people from taking guns out on the street and doing bad things, but we can substantially decrease the likelihood that another Columbine or Sandy Hook happens, that another TJ Mathis, a standup young kid, a basketball star, gets gunned down just because he is in the wrong place at the wrong time, or the right place at the right time with the wrong person with the wrong gun. We can do something about it here.

Throughout the day I have been trying to talk about the variety of victims, people on the streets of our cities but also in our schools. So before I yield the floor again, I want to go back

to the reason we are here. I think it is important to tell you who the victims are, but I think it is particularly important to tell you who the victims in Newtown, CT, were because while Newtown should not have been a tipping point, and it should not have taken this long for us to have this conversation, I think we all recognize we are having this conversation because of the 20 6- and 7-year-olds and the 6 adults who were killed that day. And I believe if we don't do something about it there will be another Newtown; that we will have another town added to the list of Aurora and Littleton and Tucson and Newtown in a matter of weeks or months—hopefully longer—if we don't take some action.

So let me go back, before I yield the floor again today, to talk some more about the wonderful children and adults who were killed in Newtown.

Mary Sherlach's husband is here today in DC lobbying on behalf of his wife, who was 1 year away from retirement as Sandy Hook's school psychologist when she was murdered that day in Sandy Hook Elementary School. He is here to talk about the insanity of not taking these high-capacity magazines off the streets. That is his passion. He believes there is a chance there would be boys and girls alive today in Newtown had Adam Lanza had 10 bullets per magazine instead of 30 bullets per magazine.

But let me tell you about Mary because Mary is pretty amazing. Mary had worked for years at Sandy Hook Elementary. She had actually been there for 18 years. She was not just the school psychologist, she was involved in basically every school improvement effort you can imagine. She was a member of the District Conflict Resolution Committee, the Safe School Climate Committee, ironically, the Crisis Intervention Team, and the Student Instructional Team. She cared so deeply about the school, it wasn't just a 9-to-5 or 9-to-3 or 7-to-3 job for her. She put in all sorts of extra hours to make the school better. She was 1 year away from retirement, and, oh, how she and Bill were looking forward to retirement. They had a little cabin on the Finger Lakes—still have a cabin in upstate New York—and they loved going up there. They had planned on spending a good part of their retirement up there when they weren't spending time with their daughters Katie and Maura.

Mary loved gardening, reading, and she loved the theater. She was a great neighbor. She was a very beautiful person, who, on that day, did something a lot of us hope we would do, though we can't really be sure. About 9:30 that morning, Adam Lanza blasted his way through the locked doors of Sandy Hook Elementary School. The principal of the school, Dawn Hochsprung, and Mary were meeting, I believe, when they heard the bullets and the glass crash. They must have known something horrible had happened. There are two instincts at that point—maybe three—you freeze, you run the other way, or you do what Dawn and Mary did. You run to the bullets. That is what she did. Her school was in trouble, something awful was happening, and Mary and her principal ran to the gunfire and the gunman. They didn't run away.

Now, plenty of people in that school did heroic and courageous things that day—they stowed kids in closets and classrooms, they hugged kids as the bullets rained down, but Mary and Dawn were the first people who died because they ran right to the bullets.

Mary is a hero not just because of the 18 years she spent dedicated to those kids, not just because of all the efforts she put in to make that school a better place, but because that day she did everything in her power to make that shooting end. She wasn't successful, but she tried, and we all hope we have a little bit of Mary Sherlach in us as well.

Mary is different than those kids. Those kids had their whole life ahead of them. We don't know what they would have done. So at least we have the benefit of knowing who Mary Sherlach was. At least we have the benefit of knowing the wonder that was her life. But she deserved retirement, and Bill deserved to have his wife, who had worked so hard and had spent all these nights trying to make her school a better place—he deserved to have her for their retirement up in the Finger Lakes, and he doesn't.

Ben Wheeler, whom I talked about earlier today, was a very gifted musician. Ben was 6 years old when he died that morning. Just before December 14, he had performed his first recital at 6 years old. I have a 4-year-old at home, and I know what an amazing thing it is to have a child be that dedicated to music that by 6 years old they can perform a recital. He loved trains. They would go to New York City a lot, and he was always more interested in riding the subway and the train than he was in visiting the museums or the zoos. That is not uncommon for kids. Maybe doing a recital at age 6 is but loving trains is not.

More than music, more than trains, more than subways, though, Ben loved his 9-year-old brother Nate. The two of them did everything together. They played soccer, they swam. As I said this morning in my first speech before this Chamber, on the way to school that morning Ben told his mom he wanted to be an architect when he grew up, but he was going to be a paleontologist because that was what his brother Nate was going to be, and he wanted to do everything Nate did.

Ben was going to be a pretty amazing man, that kind of musical talent at an early age, a love for his family, and, unfortunately, Ben Wheeler lost his life that day.

Emilie Parker was 6 years old. The one thing you will hear about with respect to Emilie when you talk to the Parker family is that she had an infectious laugh. You know those laughs you hear once and hope you get to hear it again before you leave that person's presence? That was Emilie. Her father Robbie described her as bright, creative, and loving. She always wanted to try new things, so much so that at 6 years old she was actually learning Portuguese. Her father was trying to teach her that and it was part of their bond.

She was an artist. She loved to draw with markers and she was talented. At 2 years old, she could write her own name and she could draw stick figures of her family. She loved art so much that her parents Robbie and Alissa have decided to spend a part of their period of mourning and time after that to set up a fund that honors her creativity. As I said earlier today, what is amazing is that so many of these families have dedicated big portions of their time in the horrible 4 months since trying to figure out ways to bring out some of the goodness and light from these kids' lives to the rest of the community. So Robbie and Alissa have set up a fund that is going to support art programs in schools, so art programs have a little more resources so other kids similar to their daughter can experience the joys of drawing and painting. She was learning Portuguese. This is somebody with a very inquisitive, thoughtful mind, and we never are going to get to know who Emilie Parker was going to grow up to be.

Jack Pinto was 6 years old, and he was already a jock. He loved the New York Giants, and he had an idol whose name is Victor Cruz. He loved Victor Cruz. He followed everything Victor Cruz did. He was ecstatic when the Giants won the Super Bowl and Cruz played a big part. Victor was wonderful enough in the days following the tragedy to honor Jack's memory. During the game after the tragedy, he wore writing on his cleats and his gloves that said: Jack Pinto, my hero. Jack was buried in a Victor Cruz jersey.

He was also a wrestler. I didn't even know that you wrestled at 6 years old, but Jack did, and he was pretty good at it. To show how tough Jack was, in one of his practices, he lost a tooth. When a 6-year-old loses a tooth, you would think that would start the tears flowing. But Jack didn't cry when he lost that tooth. He just took the tooth, handed it to his coach, and went back wrestling with a gapped-tooth smile on his face. That was Jack. He was tough. He was an athlete. He had perseverance. Imagine who Jack Pinto was going to be when he grew up. We are not going to know because of what happened that day.

I get it. I know there is a risk of overselling policy change. I don't want to make it sound like I am coming down to the floor and telling you these stories because these kids are going to come back to life if we pass some bill or that we are going to guarantee this doesn't happen again. I don't want to oversell what we are going to do.

But the 3,300 people who have died since Newtown should tell us that enough is enough and that we should try something. Even if we are not absolutely, 100 percent, ironclad guaranteed that what we are going to do is going to work, we should try something. Because it is not OK that somebody can walk into a school with a military-style assault weapon and shoot bullets at the rate of six per second. It is not OK that a couple students can do an end-around on the background check system to buy guns so they can walk into their high school and kill 10 people and wound as many more. It is not all right that there are thousands of illegal guns on our streets that are used to kill 16- and 17-year-olds on their way home from Sweet 16 parties. There are no guarantees that what we are going to do this week and next week is going to solve everything, but we have to try something.

So I am going to continue to come down to the floor over the course of the next few days to talk about these victims—the victims from Newtown, from Columbine. Hopefully, later today I will be able to talk about some of the victims from Virginia Tech and Wisconsin. Of course, there are just binders full of stories that we could put on this floor regarding urban gun violence that plagues our cities every day. These stories are important because too often we trade in this body in statistics, that we just talk in terms of politics. Underlying this debate are 20 little kids in Newtown whose lives were cut short but also thousands upon thousands of other kids, young adults, and adults whose stories deserve to be told.

At this point, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. 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. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the President submitted his budget today. It is very late. It was due February 4. It is the first time since the Budget Act was passed in 1974 that a President submitted a budget after the Senate has voted on one and after the House has voted on one and both passed budget resolutions. That was a disappointing event. The President, as the Chief Executive, as any mayor, as any Governor normally that I have ever heard of, wants to be the one who lays out a financial plan for his city or State to advocate for what would make the State and city better and then encourage the members of the board of directors—the Senate and the House—to evaluate his plan and support it so they can put the country and the State and the city on a sound financial path. Once again, we have had a very irresponsible approach from the President on the question of budgeting.

A few weeks ago, this Senate passed a budget for the first time in 4 years. The law requires that the Senate bring up a budget in committee by April 1. It requires that it be brought to the floor and passed by April 15. This is the first time in 4 years that process has been completed; whereas, every year the House of Representatives has produced a budget, a responsible budget that would put America on a sound financial course.

This year the Senate passed a budget that was irresponsible, did not change the debt course of America, left an annual deficit virtually the same as if we had no budget at all. It did not improve current law. The Senate budget left us with a very substantial budget deficit in the 10th year of the budget.

On the other hand, the House, Congressman PAUL RYAN, chairman of the Budget Committee, produced a budget that balances in 10 years. We have heard great complaints that his plan cuts spending too much. Do you know that plan did not cut spending? It allows spending to increase every year for 10 years. It allowed spending to increase at the rate of 3.4 percent a year, which is higher than the inflation rate is expected to be in America. Yet it balances.

The Senate budget, on the other hand, has a 5-percent-plus increase in spending every year, leaving us on an unsustainable debt path, leaving us increasing deficits every year, nowhere close to balancing the budget. That is not the right path.

What happened today when the President produced his budget? It is no better, maybe even worse, than the Senate bill. For example, in his budget it would add, over the 10-year period, $8.2 trillion in new debt to the Nation. We now have already $17 trillion in gross debt. This would add another $8.2 trillion to it; over $25 trillion will then be the debt of the United States. The 1-year interest in 2023, under the President's budget, would amount to $763 billion.

The base defense budget is about $540 billion; $763 billion exceeds Social Security—which is the largest expenditure. It exceeds Medicare in spending. It would be the largest single item in the budget and the fastest growing. It is still assuming relatively low interest rates, which are extraordinarily low at this moment but could surge in the future and would hurt us substantially.

How much is that? We now spend about $3.7 trillion, so $763 billion is a lot of money just to pay the interest. The Federal highway bill today is about $40 billion, a little over $40 billion. Interest on the debt would be $763 billion in 1 year.

Young people, we are indeed borrowing from their future to spend and live high today on the theory somehow it will be paid back in the future by the people there. How will it be paid back, interest of $763 billion in 1 year? This is not responsible. It is an unsustainable course.

Erskine Bowles, who was chosen by President Obama to head the fiscal commission, former President Bill Clinton's Chief of Staff, a successful businessman, he told us in the Budget Committee a couple years ago this Nation is on an unsustainable course. This Nation ''has never faced a more predictable financial crisis.''

What he is saying is that if we do not change the course we are on, it is guaranteed we are going to have a financial crisis and we should avoid that. We have the opportunity to avoid that. We do not have to slash spending, as Congressman RYAN has made clear in his budget. You can allow spending to increase faster than the growth of inflation and still balance the budget. But, oh no, not here, not the President of the United States, not the Members of this Senate, the majority. They say we cannot live with a 3.4-percent increase in spending every year. We will run the risk.

The President said recently he was not setting a balanced budget as a goal. That is absolutely true because his budget does not balance. It never comes close to balancing, has no intention of it balancing ever. They use the words ''sustainable balance,'' but it is not a responsible approach to the business of America. I will talk a minute about some of the dangers of this debt beyond just the fact that interest is going to suck huge amounts of money out of our annual budget that we ought to be using to invest in America.

How do they do it? When you eliminate the accounting gimmicks and honestly look at the budget presented by the President today, over 10 years, the net deficit reduction is only $119 billion. Each year that is about $12 billion in deficit reduction. The deficit last year, 2012, was 1,080 billion—1,000-plus billion, and we are going to average an $12 billion reduction in the deficit under this budget? That is virtually nothing. Properly accounted for, properly analyzed, based on the current law, I am correct in giving you those numbers. It is not an unfair number.

What about this year that we are in, 2013, that will end September 30? Does he cut anything from our spending level this year? No. Spending and debt increases. The debt is projected to increase, between now and September 30, by $61 billion, more than where it would be under current. So it increases the debt this year.

What about next year? Does it increase or reduce the deficit? It increases the deficit again by approximately $100 billion-plus—$100 billion. I believe that figure is correct. I might be incorrect on that figure, but it definitely increases the deficit this year by $61 billion.

Taxes go up by $1.1 trillion—$1,100 billion—in new taxes. So taxes go up

$1.1 trillion, on top of the $650 billion in new taxes that were passed in January of this year and on top of the $1 trillion in new taxes passed as part of ObamaCare, the health care reform.

That is another huge tax increase. But we are told not to worry because this is a balanced plan. As we talked about the budget plan that was on the floor—and we had 50 hours of debate, a lot of amendments, a lot of discussion—our colleagues kept using the word ''balanced.'' They refer to their budget, the majority's—Democratic budget that they laid forward, they used ''balanced'' over and over again. I put up a chart. The numbers kept running up. We got to 100, 200 times the word ''balanced'' was used in 15 or 18 hours of debate on their side; ''balanced,'' over 200 times.

My staff went back and reviewed the numbers and it was 230 times. What do they mean by the word ''balanced''? Why did they use the word ''balanced''? Because some pollster somewhere, some political consultant, said people like to hear that. They want a balanced budget.

Their budget didn't balance, nowhere close. So they had several spins on it,—first, they wanted a lot of people who were not following closely to hear the word ''balanced'' and believed they had a balanced budget when they didn't come close to having a budget that balanced. They never said the budget balanced because they knew that was not true. They had deficits every year, $400 billion-plus every year. So a balanced approach was what I think people who kind of kept up with things believed—that we would raise taxes by $1 trillion, we would cut spending by $1 trillion, and this would be a balanced approach. This is the way to reduce our debt and deficit: raise taxes and cut spending. That is the responsible balanced approach to getting our fiscal house in order.

But that is not what the budget did. The budget increased taxes by $1.1 trillion—$1,100 billion—but it increased spending by $964 billion. It did not cut spending at all. It increased spending. Basically, we ended up with only $119 billion in deficit reduction over 10 years—zero, basically, an insignificant amount. So it increases taxes and increases spending. It is the classic Democratic weakness, I have to say: Tax; spend. Tax more; spend more. Don't worry about the deficit.

But somebody needs to be worrying about the deficit because it is a very important matter and we have to deal with it. This morning at the Budget Committee we had a new nominee, Ms. Sylvia Burwell, for the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, one of the most important positions in the entire government. She is a delightful lady and I know she wants to do well. She held a position in that office some time ago under President Clinton, a deputy position, and she had some experience in it, but it is a tough job. We need somebody who can whip these agencies and departments into shape. The OMB is the one who answers to the President. The OMB is the one who says: Mr. Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Secretary of Defense, we don't have that much money. You can't spend that much money. I send your budget back to you. Take another $10 billion, take another $5 billion out of it. They are the heavies. So she is asking for a tough job, no doubt about it.

At that hearing, I talked a little bit about a great concern of mine. My concern is that our debt is so large now that it is pulling down economic growth in America. Let me repeat that. Our debt is so high it is pulling down economic growth, and slow growth means fewer jobs created. The difference between 2 percent growth and 3 percent growth is 1 million jobs, according to Christina Romer, who served President Obama in the White House: So the more growth we have, the more jobs are created. The less growth we have, fewer jobs are created.

We had a disastrous jobs report last Friday. It was terrible and deeply disappointing. What it said was we added 88,000 jobs when they were predicting we would add about 200,000. But more significantly, 486,000 people dropped out of the labor force, had given up finding work—almost one-half million, and less than 100,000 got a job. That was a very dangerous trend.

It comes around to this question: Is our debt so high that it adversely impacts economic growth? Let me explain it this way. The Rogoff-Reinhart study and book that they wrote analyzes debt in America and it calculated it and over the world. They examined economies worldwide. What they found was that when debt reaches 90 percent of the size of your economy, 90 percent of GDP, growth begins to slow. It slows a median amount of 1 percent, on average much more, as much as 2 percent. Growth—GDP growth begins to slow when debt reaches that high a level.

What kind of debt level is it we are dealing with? Many people think, and the President keeps saying, our debt-to-GDP ratio is 77 percent.

We have examined the Rogoff and Reinhart study. Rogoff and Reinhart used a higher figure because they compared countries from around the world, and those were the numbers they had. When the gross debt reaches 90 percent of GDP, we begin to have an economic decline. Our percentage of gross debt to GDP is 104 percent.

I contend and I believe that the projections for growth for the last 4 years have all been higher than the growth we have actually seen. In fact, it has been much lower than projected—even by the President and the Congressional Budget Office. It appears to me that the gross debt figure being over 100 percent is indicative of a slowing growth.

Rogoff and Reinhart are not the only ones who have done studies. Others have done studies as well. Europe has high debt rates. Per capita, we have more debt than any country in Europe and even more than Greece.

There have been studies in Europe. The International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank, and the Bank for International Settlements all have economists, and they are concerned about high debt in Europe. They have also been analyzing these figures. All three of those, through an independent process of analyzing the impact of high debt on economic growth—studies indicated that high debt slows growth. Well, how much? Looking at each one of those three studies, the U.S. debt is in the range that pulls down growth.

I say to my colleagues today, please be aware that there is a cost to borrowing and spending and adding debt.

The budget the President submitted today would add $8.2 trillion in debt. It would take us from $17 trillion to $25 trillion in debt. Even with a growing economy, we would still remain well over 90 percent GDP to debt, and that is an unacceptable figure.

It is deeply disappointing that we do not have leadership in the White House that would lead us to get off of this path.

Mr. President, I see the majority leader is here. I know he has extraordinary duties and challenges in his busy life, and I will just wrap up and say that I am disappointed in the President's budget. It does not change the debt course of America in any way. It is not a responsible plan for the future. It does not balance the budget ever and has no intention of ever balancing the budget. All he talks about is some sort of sustainable debt course. We cannot continue on that course, as Mr. Erskine Bowles, his own fiscal commission chairman, has told us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate my friend yielding. My time on the floor is going to be very brief.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE NOMINATION

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 4 p.m. today the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 59; that 2 hours of debate be equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

Mr. REID. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURPHY. 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. MURPHY. Mr. President, I gave my first speech on the floor of the Senate this morning. This week and next week, we will be debating one of the most fundamental issues that come to a body such as this: What can we do to better protect our kids and our loved ones from unexpected death? I care about this issue not just because it is one that is important to the families of victims in New Haven, Bridgeport, Hartford, and others who have been the victims of routine gun violence in Connecticut but, of course, because of what happened in Sandy Hook.

I spoke this morning more broadly about the awful experience of being in Connecticut, the personal experience of having been at the firehouse that day, the wonderful experience of having gotten to know the families of the Sandy Hook victims since then, and to have witnessed the millions of acts of kindness that have showered down upon Newtown in the days and weeks and months since. That tragedy has become the tipping point that has brought us here to talk about a solution to at least some of the epidemic gun violence that for too long has plagued the streets of our cities but now comes to us in waves of mass shootings happening in our schools and in our movie theaters and in our places of worship.

My hope, as a brandnew Member of the Senate, as someone who has lived through this experience as one of the representatives of Sandy Hook, is to just try to tell my colleagues whom we are talking about here. I think we get caught up in the numbers and the policy debates and we forget these are real kids, these are real people.

This is just a small sample of the victims in Newtown and the victims from across Connecticut, in Bridgeport and in New Haven, who have been gunned down prematurely. There are just too many of them. Over 3,300 people have died from guns since those 20 kids and six adults were killed in Newtown. We are not powerless. We can do something about it.

I have said over and over as I have been here on the floor today that there are no guarantees. We are not going to pass a law that is going to immediately flip a switch and assure that gun violence would not continue to be a problem, but it can be less of a problem. It can be less of a reality for kids who are walking to school fearing for their lives in urban America. It can be less of a reality for parents sending their children to elementary school, never thinking that something like what happened at Sandy Hook could occur. We can do something about it.

So I wanted to come back again to continue talking about the victims, to give them a face. I am very encouraged, as I think all of us are, to see some movement between both parties coming together on one element of this debate: background checks. Hopefully, this will be looked upon as a very good week in the midst of this debate. So I want to tell my colleagues whom we are talking about.

Let me go back to Newtown. I think this is my fourth time on the Senate floor today, and I still haven't told my colleagues about everybody who perished in that school.

The youngest victim that day was barely 6 years old. His name was Noah Pozner. He was the youngest victim and he was the first to be buried. His was the first funeral I went to amongst countless funerals I lost count of. He was young, but he was described by his uncle as ''smart as a whip.'' He had a real rambunctious streak. He could be a handful for his family and for his twin sister Arielle who was also in that school on Friday morning. She was luckily in a different class. Arielle survived; her brother did not.

He was already a very good reader. He was one of the youngest kids in his first grade class, but he was a very good reader and he was looking forward to a book he had just bought at a book fair. I will butcher the pronunciation, but it was a Ninjago book he bought at a fair he was excited about.

He was going to a birthday party on the following day, Saturday, that he was just bubbling about in the hours before he went to school. As is true for so many of the victims, his family describes him as having a huge heart. The Pozners are an amazing family who have spoken out. His mother and his uncle have been so articulate since the shooting, calling on the Nation to change. They have been in Washington visiting my office, and I know they have visited with other Members of the Senate—just another one of these families who have somehow found the courage and the strength amidst this awful grieving to come here and explain why things need to change, how they will not feel any justice until we do something here.

Caroline Previdi loved to draw and to dance. She was 6 years old as well. She had one of these big smiles that everybody loved. It brought happiness to everybody who saw that smile. She and her family were active members of the St. Rose Church. I can't tell my colleagues enough about St. Rose Church. About 10 of the victims were parishioners there. This hit that church harder than any institution save for the school. The monsignor there has been an absolute hero to the community, having buried almost a dozen of his kids. He has come down to Washington to try to lobby for some sense of change, and he has brought that community together.

At that funeral he presided over, everybody wore pink. It was Caroline's favorite color. My colleagues have heard me say that about a number of little girls who died, a lot of whom were big fans of the color pink. Her mom will always remember Caroline as the shadow of her older brother. Sometimes to his dismay, she followed him around everywhere and she adored him. Her brother Walker and she were big New York Yankees fans. Even though she was only 6 years old, when her family recently went to Boston for a family trip, she refused to walk into Fenway Park because she was a devoted Yankees fan.

Caroline had a wonderful spirit and we will never know exactly what she would grow up to be. She died that day.

Jessica Rekos was 6 years old and, as do so many little 6-year-old girls, she loved everything about animals. Again, another trend. This was a couple of first grade classes full of animal lovers, and even some of their teachers were big animal lovers as well.

Jessica loved horses. So anything having to do with a horse, she wanted it. She watched movies about horses, she read books about horses, she drew pictures about horses, and she wrote stories about horses. She was murdered just 11 days before Christmas. She was hoping that Santa would bring her a cowgirl hat and cowgirl boots, and her family even promised her that maybe, if she was really good, in a couple years she could get her own horse.

She loved going to Cape Cod and she especially loved seeing the whales. She had a fondness for aquatic life as well, a big fan of the movie ''Free Willie,'' and she loved going to the cape to see if she could catch a glimpse of those whales.

She was curious. That curiosity was going to spring forth into a wonderful young woman who was going to take her loves and her curiosity and her passion for life and make it into something great. We will never get to know exactly what that would be. Jessica died at age 6.

Ana Marquez-Greene, I talked about Ana this morning in my first speech. Her mother Nelba, who is just amazing—Nelba is a social worker who has a passion for helping people. She is in DC right now as we speak trying to push us to change things. Her little daughter Ana grew up in a musical family. Ana's father Jimmy is a very well known saxophone player, a Hartford native. The family came back to Connecticut to raise their kids. So Ana was musical. She used to love to sing and dance. She loved most of all doing that at church. She was so connected to her church. She loved reading the Bible. She loved having the Bible read to her. She loved being part of the dance and singing experience at her church. Her parents said she didn't walk anywhere. That was not her method of transportation. Her mode of transport was to dance from place to place.

She is survived by her older brother Isaiah who is a third grader at Sandy Hook Elementary and who survived that day. My colleagues can find Ana's performances on YouTube. Ana's performances have been viewed tens of hundreds of thousands of times online.

She was a talent. She had talent in her blood. Who knows whether she was going to choose music and dance as a career, but those creative muscles she had and the amazing parents who were raising her were going to assure that she was going to be something special. She died that day, horribly, but her family—her mother Nelba especially—is just determined to make sure we honor her memory by doing something here.

Five kids escaped Sandy Hook Elementary School that day out of those classrooms. Eleven kids—around that number—survived. Six of them hid in a closet, but five of them escaped because the shooter had to reload. When he reloaded, he perhaps fumbled the exchange, and five kids ran out of a classroom and were discovered nearby some moments later. Five children—unfortunately, none of those pictured in this poster—are alive today because as does happen in so many of these mass shootings, an opportunity presented itself when the shooter changed magazines.

I wish we didn't have to get into the detailed nuances of how these mass shootings play out to try to find a way out of mass violence, but we do because they are happening over and over. So we now have some experience. We now, to our great horror, have some data.

Empirically we know what happens. And what happened in Sandy Hook that killed Ana and Jessica and Noah and Caroline and so many others is that he had trouble reloading, five kids escaped, and either at the end of the 10 minutes because he had trouble reloading, or maybe just because the police were coming in, he decided enough was enough and shot himself. In Tucson, when the shooter reloaded, it was enough time for somebody to jump on him and end that incident. In Aurora, again, when the shooter had difficulty reloading—the gun jammed—the shooting ended.

So 154 bullets in 10 minutes at Sandy Hook Elementary School killed 26 people. The shooter had to reload about six times. What would have happened if he had to reload 15 times? How many more kids would have escaped? How many more opportunities would we have had for the shooting to go wrong? Would there have been a moment where somebody could have jumped on him and stopped him, as they did in Tucson? I don't know the answer to these questions. Nobody knows the answer to these questions. But they are important ones to ask because they are relevant to the conversation we are having. If the answer is that there is a pretty good chance one of those three things would have happened—the gun would have jammed, kids would have escaped, or somebody could have stopped the shooting—then we should think twice before dismissing the idea that a limitation on the size of magazines sold in this Nation wouldn't have an effect on future mass shootings.

Our first job should be to stop that shooting from happening in the first place. But given the fact we are living in this terrible, awful reality in which they are happening on a regular basis, then we have to be talking about what we can do to limit the damage and the carnage when they do occur.

I will tell my colleagues while no one is sure of the difference in outcome at Sandy Hook had the assault weapons ban still been in effect, there are plenty of parents there who do believe there is a pretty good chance some of their kids might still be alive had that bill still been in effect. Remember, these were guns and clips purchased legally. For all the arguments that all the laws on the books aren't going to stop criminals, I am not sure Nancy Lanza was going to go onto the black market to purchase an AR–15 or ammunition that was illegal. Things could have been different.

But as we know, every day there are more people killed in this country by guns than were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary that day. I will tell my colleagues that I have heard some very visceral anger from parents and gun victims in the cities I represent because they rightfully wonder why we are talking about this issue now—after Sandy Hook—when, for the last 20 years, young men and women have been getting gunned down in our cities and it didn't seem as though this place stood up and cared too much about it. They welcome the conversation, but they wonder where all of this compassion was when people such as Ronnie Chambers were being killed.

Ronnie Chambers was 33 years old when he was shot in January 2012. He grew up with his mom and his siblings in Chicago's notorious Cabrini-Green housing projects and he became involved in the gang problem at a young age. But he had to watch something that no one should ever have to watch.

You think it is terrible that Noah Pozner's twin sister has to grow up with the knowledge that her brother was gunned down. Think about what Ronnie Chambers had to grow up with, having watched his other three siblings die at the hands of gun violence.

Ronnie became convinced, after watching his three other siblings die from gun violence, that he had to turn his life around. So he did. He went into the music industry and he became a music producer and he decided to go even further and to start to mentor young performers.

People remember him in the industry as ''everybody's hero.'' He was always ''pointing kids in the right direction'' despite his own difficult upbringing.

He was fun too. He loved banana milkshakes and onion rings. Then he was killed—the fourth of four siblings to be gunned down in and around Chicago. Four brothers and sisters: His brother Carlos shot in 1995; his brother Jerome shot in 2000; his sister LaToya shot just 3 months after Jerome; and then Ronnie, dead at 33.

How about Amber Deanna Stanley, who was killed last summer in Kettering, MD. She was spending a nice, quiet evening at home when a gunman literally kicked down her door and opened fire. She was shot multiple times while she was in her bed. She was 17 years old—17. She just started her senior year at Flowers High School in Springdale, MD. She was enrolled in a very elite science and technology program.

It is crazy, but this is probably the third or fourth or fifth young woman I have talked about here today—and I am probably into 30 or 40 people I have talked about—another young woman who was pursuing a career in engineering and science. She had big dreams. She was an honors student. She was in AP classes, and she wanted to go to Harvard University and maybe become a doctor. She had the grades to do it. She could have gone anywhere she wanted.

She was also very popular. She was a kid whom people were drawn to. She was a peer leader and she would do wonderful, magnanimous things for her classmates, such as she would bring cupcakes to them somewhat spontaneously.

One classmate said three words: ''She was amazing''—until August 23 of last year, a gunman kicked down her door, opened fire, and Amber was gone.

How about Angela Player, 37 years old, shot on February 21 of this year, an avid reader who also loved the outdoors, gardening, and kayaking. She was a fan of everything fun and exciting—fast cars. She liked training dogs. She was killed by her ex-husband.

A lot of these are random killings, but a lot of these killings are by somebody you know. Her ex-husband actually did not have a history of domestic violence but had a gun ready and available in a fit of rage, and she left behind a son and a daughter.

Mr. President, 3,300 people have died since Newtown, and I think it is important, as we have this debate, to come down and talk about who these victims are. I will be doing this over the course of today and tomorrow and this week to try to bring a little bit of color to the discussion we are having.

At this time, I yield back the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank my colleague, Senator MURPHY, who gave his first speech on the floor of the Senate this morning on the same topic. He is eminently qualified to speak to this issue because of his unhappy circumstance of being a Senator-elect when the Newtown, CT, massacre occurred. I have spoken to him and Senator BLUMENTHAL about their personal life experiences and memories they will never forget about that day and those that followed.

I thank him for his voice on this issue, for his inspiration, and for speaking for many in Newtown, CT, and across the Nation who otherwise might not have as strong a voice on the floor of the Senate. I thank the Senator very much for that.

I would like to speak as in morning business briefly and then return to the underlying bill on firearms. I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

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

REMEMBERING ROBERT REMINI

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in an interview with Roll Call newspaper a while back, Robert Remini—one of the great historians of our time—talked about what he hoped for after he died. Professor Remini said his idea of Heaven would be listening with his own ears to debates involving congressional giants such as Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John C. Calhoun.

On March 28—Holy Thursday—Robert Remini died in a suburban Chicago hospital from complications of a recent stroke at the age of 91.

I hope his wish comes true. I hope right now he is listening in awe somewhere in Heaven as the great issues are debated in the Great Beyond.

Robert Remini lived a good and full life. He spent most of his career at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he founded the university's respected Institute for the Humanities. He produced a remarkable body of work that brought important chapters of America's history to life.

In 2002, at the age of 80, Professor Remini became a distinguished visiting scholar of American history at the Library of Congress.

At the request of Librarian of Congress James Billington, Professor Remini spent the next 3 years writing the history of the House of Representatives. That is where I met him. What a man, a great historian, a great personality, with a smile on his face every minute of the day.

Professor Remini was once asked how he found the stamina to start writing another book at the age of 80. He said he started by setting a goal for himself to write nine pages a day. Then he did what he had been taught by the Jesuits who trained him. He designed a plan to reward success and punish failure. This historian, this writer, this man who had assigned himself nine pages a day, would only get his reward at the end of the day—a martini—if he met his goal of nine pages.

His system worked. ''The House'' was published in the year 2006.

In 2005, House Speaker Dennis Hastert, from Illinois, asked Professor Remini to become the official Historian of the U.S. House of Representatives. The post of House Historian had been empty for more than 10 years. Over the next 5 years, Professor Remini rebuilt the office's small staff and reestablished its reputation for impartial scholarship and integrity.

He retired from the House in 2010, but he kept writing until shortly before his death.

In all, he wrote and coauthored more than 20 books. His subjects included Presidents John Quincy Adams and Martin Van Buren, House Speaker Henry Clay, Senator and statesman Daniel Webster, and Mormon leader Joseph Smith.

As one former colleague said, he wrote with such immediacy ''that you might think he'd had lunch . . . with Martin Van Buren. He is an American treasure.''

The subject that interested him the most, though, was none of those great figures but Andrew Jackson. At least 10 of Professor Remini's books were about Jackson, including an influential three-volume biography, the third volume of which won the National Book Award for nonfiction in 1984.

To Professor Remini, Andrew Jackson was ''the embodiment of the new American.'' He was:

> An orphan, poor, and yet talented, who through his own abilities, raised himself to the highest office in the land. He personified what the American Dream is all about. That it is not class or money or bloodlines that are rewarded in [America], but rather the ability of each individual to achieve something worthwhile in life.

Professor Remini did not excuse Jackson for his backward views on slavery or women's rights or his harsh treatment of Native Americans.

He regarded Jackson as admirable because:

> He believed in this Union. He believed in this country. . . . [H]e . . . believed that government shouldn't be for only a small segment of society, but for all of us. That's what I want in [a] President.

So said Professor Remini.

Robert Vincent Remini was born in New York City. He graduated from Fordham University in 1943. He wanted to be a lawyer, but that changed after he enlisted in the Navy during World War II. To pass the time on board ship, he read history, including all nine volumes of Henry Adams' ''History of the United States of America.'' By the time the war ended, he knew it was history, not law, that he loved the most.

He returned to New York to obtain his master's and doctorate in history from Columbia University, and he married his childhood sweetheart, Ruth Kuhner. He taught at Fordham University for 12 years.

In 1965, he moved to Chicago and became the first chair of the history department at the newly established University of Illinois at Chicago's Circle Campus. He later founded the university's interdisciplinary Institute for the Humanities. He chaired that from 1981 to 1987. He became a professor emeritus of history and research professor emeritus of humanities in 1991.

He was an institution, not only in the field of history but certainly in Chicago and at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

In addition to the National Book Award, his other honors include the Lyndon Baines Johnson Foundation Award, the Carl Sandburg Award for Nonfiction, the University Scholar Award of the University of Illinois, the American Historical Association's Award for Scholarly Distinction, and the Freedom Award from the U.S. Capitol Historical Society.

Professor Remini's wife Ruth passed away last year. I wish to express my condolences to their children, Robert, Elizabeth, and Joan, their three grandchildren, and to Professor Remini's friends, colleagues, and former students. I will close with this: In 2003, the National Endowment for the Humanities invited Professor Remini to deliver its inaugural ''Heroes of History'' lecture. He chose as his subject the Members of the first Congress.

This is part of what he said of those men in whose footsteps many of us follow:

> Ordinary. Most of them were ordinary individuals as far as the record shows, yet they performed heroically. And they deserve to be called heroes because they set aside their local and regional differences, their economic and personal prejudices, in their effort to make the Constitution succeed and thereby establish an enduring union. They had many disagreements, but they resolved them in compromise. And they did it for the sake of showing the world that a republican government was a viable instrument for the protection of liberty and betterment of its citizens.

If Professor Remini were here today, he would tell us that the spirit of principled compromise is more than a noble part of our past; it is the best hope for our future.

Now I will make a statement as part of the continuing debate on the outstanding legislation, S. 649.

As I mentioned before when Senator MURPHY spoke, I rise to speak about a vote the Senate is going to take tomorrow as we begin debating legislation to reduce gun violence.

I am glad we are finally having this vote. There were some who thought we would never reach this point. It has been far too long since the Senate held a reasonable debate on how best to protect our children and families and schools and communities from violent shootings.

When we talk to the families who have lost children to gunfire—and it has been my sad duty to do that over and over again—and when we talk to law enforcement officials who are getting outgunned by criminals on the streets every day, we know this debate is long overdue.

Some Senators have said they do not want to touch this issue. They have announced their intention to filibuster in order to try to stop us from even debating gun safety. This is an extreme political position. It is an unfortunate position. But, fortunately, over the last few days, a growing number of Senators from both sides of the aisle have made it clear this debate is going to move forward.

I hope the vote tomorrow reflects that, and when we get to the point where we are in debate, we can roll up our sleeves and get to work. We can look at our Constitution, which we have sworn to uphold, including the second amendment, and we can also look to the needs of America to protect the life, liberty, and opportunity for happiness for the people who live in this country.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, over 11,000 Americans—11,000—are murdered with guns each year. That is more each year than all the American lives lost in the 9/11 attacks, Iraq, and Afghanistan combined.

When we count suicides and accidental shootings, more than 31,000 Americans are killed by guns each year. That is 87 Americans killed every single day by guns. Another 200 are shot each day but survive. Think of those numbers.

Gun violence in America is truly at epidemic levels. Gunshots now kill over four times more Americans per year than HIV/AIDS, and shooting deaths are projected to surpass car accident deaths within the next few years.

These statistics should give us all pause. But numbers cannot truly capture the deeply personal impact of gun violence. There are too many families who now face an empty chair at the dinner table, too many parents who walk past an empty bedroom, too many husbands and wives who have lost the loves of their lives because of guns.

It is heartbreaking. But, sadly, it is almost routine—in a park in Chicago; at a nightclub in my hometown of East St. Louis, IL; in a movie theater in Auroro, CO; in a shopping center in Tucson, AZ; in a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, WI; at military bases in Texas, Virginia, and Kentucky; in college lecture halls in DeKalb, IL, and Blacksburg, VA; sadly, in the first-grade classrooms in Newtown, CT.

Since the Newtown shooting on December 14, more than 3,300 Americans have been killed by guns, including at least 220 children and teenagers. The violence continues. Americans all across the country are saying with one voice: Enough. We have to do something. We need to protect our kids, our communities, our schools, and this epidemic of gun violence has to come to an end.

On Thursday, we will vote to begin debate on a bill that would take commonsense steps to prevent gun violence. It is called the Safe Communities, Safe Schools Act. The Senate Judiciary Committee reported the parts of the bill last month. The committee held three lengthy hearings and four markups which I attended.

The Safe Communities, Safe Schools Act would do three things: First, it makes sure that the FBI NICS background check programs are conducted on all gun sales with some reasonable exceptions. Currently, up to 40 percent of all transfers of firearms include no background check. Someone raised the point in one of our hearings, what if you got on the airplane and they announced to you—the flight attendant said: Welcome to this flight from Washington to Chicago. The Transportation Security Agency has checked 60 percent of the passengers to make sure they are not carrying a bomb but not the other 40 percent. Have a nice flight. What would you think about it? You would think, for goodness' sake, we have to do everything we can to check everyone if we are truly dedicated to safety. That is what this universal background check is about.

We would also create tough Federal criminal penalties for illegal straw purchasing and the trafficking of guns. Get the picture. If you are going to buy a gun from a licensed dealer, they are going to run a background check on you. If your background check discloses, for example, that you have a felony conviction or that you are under a domestic violence order or that have you been adjudged mentally incompetent, unstable, and you should not own a gun, you will not be sold that gun.

Since we came up with this idea of background checks, up to 2 million unqualified people tried to buy them and we stopped them. That is what the law is supposed to do. But under the current circumstances, straw purchasers go in and buy a gun because they have a clean record. So the gangster, the mobster, the drug gang member, the thug sends his girlfriend in to buy the gun. She does not have a criminal record. She buys the gun, comes outside and hands it to him. He turns around and uses it to kill someone. This bill is going to change what happens to her. Of course, he is still going to face the full brunt of the law for his misdeeds. But she is now going to be held accountable, too, up to 15 years of hard time in Federal prison for buying that gun.

We had a press conference in Chicago and said: Girlfriend, think twice. He ain't worth it. To run the risk of spending 15 years in prison if you buy a gun to give to that boyfriend who is going to turn around and use it in a crime, it ain't worth it. This bill would also authorize additional resources to keep schools safe.

These proposals just make sense. They have strong support from the American public, including a majority of gun owners. The National Rifle Association may speak for the gun industry, but it does not speak for gun owners. Gun owners, and I know them. They are part of my family. I have grown up with them my entire life. They are good, God-fearing, churchgoing, patriotic Americans who value their guns and use them properly, store them safely at home away from kids. These are people who will follow the law. They understand we have to stop those who misuse guns from getting their hands on them. A majority of those gun owners across America, sportsmen, hunters, those who buy guns for self-defense support what we are doing in this bill.

The straw purchasing and school safety proposals passed in committee with strong bipartisan votes. I am hopeful we will be able to adopt the bipartisan floor amendment from Senators MANCHIN and TOOMEY on background checks.

All these proposals are also supported by law enforcement. It was about 3 weeks ago. I went to the Chicago Police Department headquarters. Superintendent McCarthy invited me in. I sat down for about an hour with 10 beat cops from Chicago. They are ones who literally get up every morning and go, usually undercover, into neighborhoods and try to stop the murders and violence. I sat there. One of them had just gotten back from his 11th surgery. He got in a shootout with a 15-year-old who shattered his leg. He has had 11 surgeries trying to get back on his feet and get back on the force.

We talked about what life was like out there. They talked about 14- and 15-year-olds packing guns and firing away. They are not worth a darn as a shot. They, sadly, kill a lot of people they do not intend to kill. They are as irresponsible as they come, but it is the reality of the mean streets of many cities. So these people in law enforcement agree we need to do something about the straw purchasers, for example. So do the prosecutors, the medical community, the faith community, teachers, mayors, colleges, universities, and, most important, the family members of gun violence victims. Many of those family members from Newtown are here today. Senator MURPHY from Connecticut spoke earlier, as did Senator BLUMENTHAL, to note their persuasive lobbying as they walk the Halls of Congress, hoping the sad and awful tragedy they went through on December 14 will at least lead to a safer America.

I salute them. In their grief, they are standing up to make this a safer nation. Unfortunately, some parts of the gun lobby have had a long history of opposing even those commonsense ideas. They have raised objections to them. I want to respond to the main objections the gun lobby has raised. As it turns out, they just do not stand up to scrutiny.

First, the gun lobby claims that requiring FBI background checks for gun sales will lead to the creation of a national gun registry. That claim is absolutely totally false. Federal law prohibits the Federal Government from establishing a national gun registry. We could argue the merits of it, but we have to acknowledge the reality. It does not exist today. It will not exist as a result of this bill.

I have a copy of a letter signed by 30 Senators, including 26 Republicans. I ask unanimous consent to have this letter printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, November 3, 2011.

Hon. DANIEL INOUYE,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

Hon. BARBARA MIKULSKI,
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, Senate Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

Hon. HAROLD ROGERS,
Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

Hon. FRANK WOLF,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Science, and Related Agencies, House Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN AND CHAIRWOMAN: As supporters of the Second Amendment and the rights of law-abiding gun owners, we are writing to urge the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to maintain several House-passed firearms provisions in the upcoming Conference Report on H.R. 2112, the legislative vehicle for the Fiscal Year 2012 Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS), and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. While these provisions had broad, bipartisan support in the Senate, the amendments that would have reinstated these provisions in the Senate version of H.R. 2112 did not receive a vote.

Over the years, Congress has taken many actions to preserve Second Amendment rights and prevent undue encroachment on those rights on the part of the Executive Branch. One of the most common ways in which Congress has accomplished this goal has been through a number of general provisions in CJS Appropriations bills. Most of these protections have been in place for a number of years—some going back as far as three decades—and none of them have been the source of any significant controversy.

The House CJS Appropriations bill (H.R. 2596) made permanent nine separate Second Amendment protections. However, the Senate version of H.R. 2112 stripped the House language and extended these protections only through Fiscal Year 2012. We believe these protections should not be subject to yearly reinstatement, they should be permanently fixed in the law.

Specifically, the House-passed provisions would make permanent the following protections:

Firearms Database Prohibition. A prohibition on the use of funds to create, maintain or administer a database of firearms owners or their firearms. This prohibition has been in place since FY 1979 and prevents the federal government from establishing a national gun registry.

Curio and Relic Definition. A prohibition on the use of funds to change the definition of a ''curio or relic.'' This provision protects the status of collectible firearms for future generations of firearms collectors. This provision has been included since Fiscal Year 1997.

Physical Inventory Prohibition. Prohibition on a requirement to allow a physical inventory of Federal Firearms Licensees. The Clinton Administration proposed a rule in 2000 to require an annual inventory by all licensees, While the Bush Administration eventually withdrew the proposal, Congress has still passed this preventive provision every year, beginning in FY 2007.

Information Retrieval Prohibition. A prohibition on the use of funds to electronically retrieve personally identifying information gathered by federal firearms licensees. This provision prohibits the creation of a gun registry from dealers' records that are required by law to be surrendered to the federal government when a dealer goes out of business. This provision has been included since FY 1997.

Business Activity. A prohibition on the use of funds to deny a Federal Firearms License (FFL) or renewal of an FFL on the basis of business activity. This provision prohibits BATFE from denying federal firearms license applications or renewals based on a dealer's low business volume alone. Congress added this general provision in FY 2005.

Information Gathering Prohibition. A prohibition on the use of funds to maintain any information gathered as a part of an instant background check or to maintain information for more than 24 hours. This provision protects the privacy of law-abiding gun buyers by prohibiting information about legal gun purchases from being kept by government authorities. It has been included since FY 1999.

Firearms Trace Data Disclaimer. A requirement that any trace data released must include a disclaimer stating such trace data cannot be used to draw broad conclusion about firearms-related crime. This provision has been included since FY 2005.

Firearms Parts Export to Canada. A prohibition on the use of funds to require an export license for small firearms parts valued at less than $500 for export to Canada. This provision removed an unnecessary and burdensome requirement on U.S. gun manufacturers that was imposed under the Clinton Administration, It has been included since FY 2006.

Importation of Curios and Relics. A prohibition on the use of funds to arbitrarily deny importation of qualifying curio and relic firearms. This provision insures that collectible firearms that meet all legal requirements for importation into the United States are not prevented from import by Executive Branch fiat. This provision has been included since FY 2006.

Once again, these are non-controversial protective measures that have long had the support of members of both parties. Had a vote taken place, they most certainly would have been included in the Senate bill, Once again, we urge the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, particularly those who will serve on the upcoming Conference Committee on H.R. 2112, to work to ensure that the language making these protections permanent are included in the Conference Report.

Thank you for your attention regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Orrin G. Hatch; Johnny Isakson; Mark Begich; Jim DeMint; Michael B. Enzi; Lindsey Graham; Dean Heller; Rob Portman; John Barrasso; Mitch McConnell; Kelly Ayotte; Tom Coburn; Olympia Snowe; Ron Johnson; James M. Inhofe; Mike Johanns; Richard Burr; John Thune; Roger Wicker; Pat Roberts; John Boozman; Mike Lee; Jon Tester; Max Baucus; Saxby Chambliss; Chuck Grassley; Marco Rubio; Lisa Murkowski; David Vitter; Joe Manchin.

Mr. DURBIN. This letter, dated November 3, 2011, describes a number of longstanding prohibitions in Federal law. Let me quote the letter's description of two:

Firearms database prohibition. A prohibition on the use of funds to create, maintain or administer a database of firearm owners or their firearms. This prohibition has been in place since fiscal year 1979 and prevents the Federal Government from establishing a national gun registry.

Information gathering prohibition. A prohibition on the use of funds to maintain any information gathered as part of an instant background check or to maintain information for more than 24 hours. This provision protects the privacy of law-abiding gun buyers by providing information about legal gun purchases from being kept by government authorities, and has been included in the law since fiscal year 1999.

There you have it. This letter, signed by Senator MCCONNELL, the Republican leader, Senators HATCH, INHOFE, GRASSLEY, DEMINT, and many others, showed that the claims about a national gun registry are baseless. There is no evidence of such a registry. Longstanding Federal laws prevent the creation of it. Anyone who continues to claim the FBI background check will lead to a national gun registry should be shown this letter signed by Republican Senators.

Second, the gun lobby claims these proposals would unduly burden law-abiding gun owners. What is the burden? In 2011, the FBI reported the background check system had an instant determination rate of 91.5 percent. That means 91 percent-plus of background checks were resolved in a matter of minutes. For those other background checks where the dealer is instructed to temporarily delay the sale to allow for a more thorough check, the FBI must give a response within 3 days or the sale will be allowed to go through. In other words, a background check is, at most, a minor temporary inconvenience to a small percentage of law-abiding Americans.

Meanwhile, the public safety and law enforcement benefits of background checks are enormous. Background checks have stopped unlawful users from buying guns over 1.5 million times. There is no reason for law-abiding Americans to worry about tougher penalties for straw purchases and gun trafficking. Those activities are already illegal and law-abiding Americans will not be engaged in them.

In short, the proposals before the Senate will not burden law-abiding gun owners. They will help to save lives, reduce crime, and keep guns from the hands of those who misuse them.

Third claim by the gun lobby. They claim we should not pass any new gun laws until there is more enforcement of the laws on the books. I am all for that. But it is blatantly hypocritical of the gun lobby to say we should just enforce the gun laws on the books when they constantly work to weaken those same laws.

For example, in the last few years, the gun lobby has gotten Congress to change the laws on the books to repeal the Reagan-era prohibition on loaded guns in national parks, to require Amtrak to allow guns to be transported on their trains, to give the gun industry unprecedented immunity from liability under civil law, and to pass appropriations riders which make it harder for law enforcement agencies to enforce gun laws, such as the ludicrous Tiahrt amendment that prevents information sharing about even traces of guns used in the commission of crimes.

Not only does the gun lobby try to get Congress to undo the gun laws on

the books, it has also supported court challenges to these same laws across the country.

Here is the best example: The gun lobby claims to be outraged that there are not more Federal prosecutions when a person tries to buy a gun but is denied by the FBI NICS background check. The Federal agency that reviews those NICS denial cases to see whether they merit prosecution is the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, or ATF. As we all know, the gun lobby has gone to great political lengths to make it harder for the ATF to do its job. The gun lobby has blocked ATF from getting a Senate-confirmed Director for six straight years. They have pushed appropriations riders that limit the ATF's authority, and they have sought to repeal ATF regulations in Court.

The best part is, at the same time the gun lobby tries to prevent ATF from carrying out its enforcement responsibilities, the gun lobby has pushed a rider into law that explicitly prevents Congress from transferring any of ATF's functions to any other agency, such as the FBI. So the gun lobby says that all we should do is enforce the gun laws on the books. Then they make it harder for the Federal Government to do that.

Here is the bottom line. We are going to have votes soon, starting tomorrow, to see where the Members of the Senate stand. Are they going to stand with the police officers, the legislatures, the teachers, the prosecutors, the doctors, the mayors, the victims and their families, and the strong majority of Americans who support proposals that will save lives, commonsense gun safety proposals? Or are they going to stand with the gun lobby that refuses to compromise even when lives could be saved?

I know where I am going to stand. I stand with Americans such as the family of Hadiya Pendleton, the promising, beautiful young teenage girl gunned down just weeks ago in a Chicago park. She had been out here for President Obama's inauguration. It was a thrilling day for her to be here with her high school friends and classmates. In a matter of days, she had been gunned down in a park after school.

I stand with Sandra Wortham, whose brother, Chicago police officer Thomas Wortham, IV, was shot and killed by gang members with a straw-purchased gun while he stood in the driveway of his father's home. The gun lobby would like us to forget about these victims. But there is no way we can.

Sandra Wortham testified at a hearing I chaired in February on gun violence. She talked about how her brother, a policeman in Chicago, was armed and shot back, but it did not save him. She told us there is nothing anti-gun about doing more to keep guns out of the hands of the people who will misuse them. It was pretty powerful testimony.

The NRA posted a summary of my hearing on their Web site describing the hearing as ''an attack on guns.'' They described the testimony given by five of our six witnesses, but they said nothing about Sandra Wortham, who lost her brother, the Chicago policeman. They pretended her testimony never happened. They did not want people to remember her story.

It is not the only time. A few weeks ago, the NRA proposed a set of redline changes to the gun trafficking bill that Senators LEAHY, KIRK, COLLINS, GILLIBRAND, and I are cosponsoring. The key section of that bill was named after Hadiya Pendleton of Chicago. That was Senator KIRK's idea and a darn good one. What was the first change the NRA proposed? Deleting Hadiya Pendleton's name from the bill. They did not want to be reminded of this young girl who lost her life to gun violence.

The gun lobby may hope we forget about Americans such as the Pendletons and the Worthams, but we will not. None of us should.

I urge my colleagues to join with the majority of Americans who support commonsense reforms that will reduce gun deaths and keep guns out of the hands of criminals. That is what we should do. I see my colleagues Senator KAINE and Senator LEE on the floor. Let me close by just reminding those who are following this debate what other countries have done when they have experienced tragic mass shootings.

They have acted to toughen the gun laws, often going far further than any proposal we have before the Senate. In Australia, on April 28, 1996, a gunman started shooting at tourists in Port Arthur. He killed 35 people. In response, that nation dramatically toughened their standards for gun ownership, banned assault weapons, and launched a buyback of hundreds of thousands of semiautomatic rifles. I might tell you, that is not included in this bill we are considering.

After these laws were passed, gun homicides and suicides decreased dramatically, and Australia has not had a single mass shooting since 1996.

In Finland, there were two mass school shootings in 2007 and 2008. The first involved a teenager who killed eight people at a high school, and the second involved a gunman who killed 10 at a culinary school.

In response, Finland raised the minimum age for gun ownership and toughened their background check requirements.

In Scotland, on March 13, 1996, a gunman entered a primary school in the town of Dunblane and killed 16 young children and their teacher. In response, the United Kingdom actually went so far as to ban virtually all handguns.

The measures we are working on in the Senate today are modest in comparison with steps other countries took in response to mass shootings. Even though we have over 300 million guns in America and a strong tradition of gun ownership, the measures we are considering have overwhelming support among the majority of Americans and gun owners. We should move forward with these measures.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be recognized for up to 5 minutes as if in morning business and then Senator LEE be recognized for up to 5 minutes following my remarks.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. KAINE. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. KAINE pertaining to the introduction of S. 700 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. KAINE. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. LEE. I thank the Senator from Virginia for his cooperation in allowing me this time.

The President of the United States has spent the last several weeks evoking the tragedy of Sandy Hook and highlighting the voices of the victims in an effort to promote his gun control proposals. He has not explained to the American people how any of these new gun control measures would have prevented that or any other terrible tragedy or how any of these measures would reduce gun violence in any measurable way. Instead, his proposals would serve primarily to restrict the rights of law-abiding citizens.

Recently, I launched a project called Protect2A, which is an attempt to reach out to those who are reluctant to see changes to our Bill of Rights, our Bill of Rights eroded, and believe Members of Congress should be doing everything in their power to protect the second amendment rights of citizens. This is also as we should be protecting all the rights protected by our Constitution.

I am pleased to announce the response to Protect2A has been overwhelming. In less than 2 days, we have received well over 1,000 responses on my Web site. The vast majority of them recognized that the President's proposal will not make them safer but will, rather, result in limiting their rights as law-abiding citizens.

It is with this in mind I would now like to ensure their voices have become an important part of this debate. I have several quotes from Americans across the country who oppose these measures and wish Senators to stand up for them and their constitutional rights.

Roger, from my home State of Utah, writes as follows:

As a veteran, I've had too many ''brothers'' and ''sisters'' make sacrifices to uphold the Constitution of the United States. Their blood will not be in vain. While I believe our rights are not granted by government, I believe that documentation of these rights in

the United States Constitution has helped us maintain our freedoms. Why is the Second Amendment important to me? Because without it, the rest of our rights can simply be wiped away.

Jim from Louisiana writes as follows:

I lived through the Los Angeles riots. My wife and I were living in Silver Lake. For 5 days we watched the warm glow of businesses being burned on two sides. For 5 days we never saw a law enforcement officer. We were on our own. My wife and I were unarmed. The couple across the street had a pair of shotguns, and the elderly gentleman next to them had a .38 service revolver from his days in the LAPD. After it became clear that law enforcement had abandoned the citizens of Los Angeles, we took shifts watching the street and who was coming and going. Our neighbors brought us coffee in the middle of the night, a night that was lit with the flames of burning buildings. Twice cars came up our street, saw us armed, and turned around. I have no doubt that the drivers had things on their minds other than getting home to loved ones.

As soon as I could, I went out and bought my first handgun. I will not be disarmed. I will not be a victim. And I will not let my boys be victims. Legal or not, I am giving them my guns as they get mature enough to use them. If our government is so out of touch they will make law-abiding citizens criminals, it's just something my family will have to deal with. But we will not disarm.

David, from Missouri, wrote the following:

I am a handicapped 78-year-old male living alone. I have applied for and received a conceal-carry permit, which I feel is my Second Amendment right. I hope and pray that I never have to use my firearm, but will if challenged to do so.

Please don't treat the subject of the Second Amendment like you did with my health care, by passing legislation that you didn't even read.

Carolyn from New Jersey writes:

Protection of the 2A is necessary in order to preserve the integrity of our Constitution. The ''ruling elite'' cannot pick and choose which amendments they like, and which they don't. We, the people, are sovereign citizens, and we are protected by the Constitution.

Annie, from Georgia, writes the following:

Dear Senator, how I wish we as a civilized nation did not have to go through this in order to defend our 2nd Amendment that has been in place for all these years. It is very important that we the citizens keep our weapons to be able to defend ourselves from criminals as well as to send a message to the government that we are not under any dictatorship. We are a free country, and we are ready to defend our position against anyone who tries to take away what rights we have. To me, personally, my guns are my defense to protect my family, and I have had to make use of them for that reason in the past and will do it again since the police cannot be available fast enough . . . Please protect our rights, because once we lose this amendment, we are defenseless and others will follow. I do not want to live again in a country where citizens have no ''voice,'' where there is no democracy and the people live in fear of what they say. I am a legal citizen of the USA, by choice. I am an American, and I love this country like my own. Thanks so much for what you are doing. Let our voices be heard.

Mr. President these are just a few of the excerpts. I ask unanimous consent to have the rest of these statements printed in the RECORD.

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

Michael—Pennsylvania

Thank You for taking This stand . . . Not only is it the 2nd Amendment at stake here but the right to protect my family and my house . . . I have had 2 encounters since living in my current house of 28 years . . . with the last one . . . the police told me flat out that they couldn't stop a crime all they do . . .95% of the time is take a report on the crime now some want to take this right away from me . . . Guns have been a part of my family for at least 5 generations and never has there been a bad instance with any of our guns . . .

Richard—Pennsylvania

I am a law abiding citizen who deserves the right to protect my family from criminals and tyranny. I abhor violence as do most law abiding citizens but the individuals who commit gun crimes are by definition criminals. This current ''debate'' has not been about reducing violence and I am disappointed in Pro 2A politicians for allowing the conversation to be dictated by politicians who neither understand how guns work nor have the ability to use logic or reason and use emotions and rhetoric to expand control while putting law abiding citizens and freedom at risk. Gun control has not and will never work because it does not address the cause. When we as a country decided to reduce drunk driving deaths the drivers were and are prosecuted not cars or alcohol and it has been successful. Take guns away from law abiding citizens and neglect to enforce and prosecute gun crimes and the result is Chicago. We need to enforce current laws and have a zero tolerance policy for gun crimes while addressing mental illness and a culture that glorifies violence.

Please do everything in your power to protect our rights and change the focus of this conversation to the criminals.

Leslie—Minnesota

Because it a legal right as given by our founding fathers to protect our selves, family's, state and country from harm from any direction. Keep up the good work.

Holly—Florida

Years ago, I was robbed at gunpoint by 2 young gang bangers. A call to 911 received no response from the police—none. After that incident, my father gave me one of his small hand guns & took me to the range to teach me how to use it. I have no record of transfer, no background check paperwork, just a clear memory of having a gun held to my head & the knowledge that—if I ever had to—I could defend myself in my home. I fear that the knee jerk gun restrictions emanating from DC and state governments will expose me & others like me to harm. I also fear that the contents of these proposed bills are yet one more excuse for a governmental money grab. I pray you will meet with success in your efforts. Thank you.

Rick—Kentucky

Senator Lee, Thank you for taking a stand for our 2nd Amendment rights. The 2nd Amendment not only provides the American public an avenue to protect themselves and their loved ones when and if the need ever arises, a means of hunting to provide food for ones family, as a sport to compete and enjoy the company of others, but more importantly provides the American people with a means to protect itself from a tyrannical government. Our Founding Fathers and framers of our Constitution knew better than any of us today that government in any form can easily become the enemy of the inherent freedoms and rights of it's citizenry. The 2nd Amendment was put in place as the protectorate and armed guard for each and every other Amendment in the Bill of Rights. Over the last several decades, these rights and freedoms provided us through the Constitution have been slowly watered or otherwise whittled down by our government, and considering our current political and social climate, the 2nd Amendment is more important than ever. Unfortunately the opponents of individual freedom are now using an axe to chop away at this, our most important Amendment. I, like all Americans was horrified by the recent and senseless murders in Colorado & Connecticut, but in our grief, many Americans are failing to realize that the problems of our society cannot be washed away simply by removing the inanimate object from the equation. Was it the fault of the airplane or the Boeing Aircraft Company for the deaths of innocents in the 9/11 terrorist attack? No, it was the human beings, with evil in their hearts and minds that were the cause, utilizing an otherwise useful piece of machinery as the mechanism of death. It's times like these when an individual needs to take a stand, to be respectful of those who believe differently than himself, but be resolved to fight for what he believes in none the less. I believe strongly in the 2nd Amendment the same way I believe that it's purpose is just as strong today as it was in our Founding Father's day and I will be standing up for my rights. Thank you for standing with me.

Michael—Utah

More than ever we need to protect our God-given liberties and freedoms. While I mourn for the loss of life from whatever may be the cause, the further eroding of our liberties will make us neither safer nor freer. The overwhelming majority of gun owners are law abiding citizens. There will always be the few that choose to live by their own rules and norms.

I am the father of a 12 year old and an 8 year old and I want them to enjoy the freedoms that have been enjoyed by previous generations. Do I want them safe? Of course. Do I think further restrictions of firearms and/or ammunition will do this? No. A mentally ill individual will do harm with a 10 round magazine just as they would with a 30 round magazine. I would like to see us put more resources toward helping those with these life changing problems. How sad and difficult it must be for the loved ones.

Press forward with protecting the freedoms and responsibilities of our citizenry.

Jeffrey—Indiana

The Founders understood that control of weaponry, with respect to law abiding citizens, is not about gun control—it is about people control. When the people are no longer in control of their own destinies, then there is tyranny. The Founders also feared that once power left the people's hands, the only way to regain that power over their own lives would be with blood. The 2nd Amendment protects against the need for another revolution of blood.

Vitaliy—Colorado

My family and I immigrated here, legally, from Russia/soviet union to live free and to have opportunity sadly unavailable to most in the world.

These freedoms and liberties are coming under attack, starting with the 2nd amendment. There is a reason why it is 2nd and not 5th or 10th—it guarantees us the right to protect our freedoms if they are being threatened.

I served in the military and swore to protect the constitution of the United States.

The entire constitution, not just parts of it I like. I feel like our president is in violation of that oath.

I understand that there is a push to get hands of criminals and those mentally unstable away from weapons that can potentially be used against citizens and kids, but this plan that those on the Left want, do not guarantee our safety one bit, instead they take rights of those who are law abiding.

I'm also sick to my stomach that the president and those on the left use kids faces and their parents to stand in front of them like puppets while the politicians try to abnegate. I cannot believe a human being in such power can exploit a tragedy to advance his political views.

Walter—Florida

This story was recent . . . On Friday April 6th, 2013 my place of business received a phone call that ended with the individual threatening to kill my receptionist and everyone in the building. I immediately placed the building on lock down and called the police. While I was waiting for police to arrive, I retrieved my fire arm from my car and began to carry it in my person as I walked around and checked all entry points. The police finally arrived 15 minutes later and very calmly said that there was no crime committed and that they can't do anything. They then left. This really disturbed me as if I did not have a gun in my possession my employees and I would be nothing but sitting targets. The police are great and I respect them a great deal, but they are reactive not proactive. I equate this to if a fire breaks out, I want to put it out with an extinguisher and not only wait for the fire department. At the end of the day I escorted my employees out to their cars and waited until they drove off, all while I was armed. I am a very responsible gun owner who hopes to God that I never ever have to aim my gun at someone, let alone shoot and kill someone. I love my family, employees and friends too much than to not be armed and just stand around if God forbid something were to happen and I stand helpless watching them be injured or killed. Just because I follow the laws doesn't mean the person who made the death threat does. Please fight for my right to protect the ones I care about most. Thank you and God bless!

EddieJean—Utah

My family for generations have fought with their lives to protect the constitution of the United States. I remember as a child feeling pride in my country by saying the pledge of allegiance. I am still a very proud American and believe in the rights of all Americans. When my husband, daughter and I moved from Arkansas to Arizona (while my husband was in the military) it was a shocker to my system. Moving was exhausting, and like many new young couples with no money and moving ourselves, we were so excited to find an affordable home in a not so scary neighborhood. It was about 2 weeks when we woke (we slept in our living room, we did not have a bed) to someone trying to open our front door. Terrified, my husband told me to go get our young daughter, while he grabbed his revolver. I got our daughter, got behind my husband and called the police. The lady on the line was very concerned and talked to me the whole time. The person trying to get in was very persistent, and moved the window. I was so scared and asked where are the police, what is taking so long, she explained that they put calls in order of threat. I said this is important and the person or person's are trying to get in. She asked if we were armed I said yes, but we did not want to hurt anyone (a crazy statement), because I did not know the person on the other side, who would possibly kill me and my whole family for what $10.00 and no items of value. My husband finally yelled I have a gun and I know how to use it; I am not sure but the person on the other side must have decided not to take the chance, seeing our Arkansas plate that we probably did know how to use it, or to find a less threatening home. It took the officers over 45 minutes to arrive to our home and when I asked what took so long, one responded, if you had been shot or dying we would have been here sooner. I am a law abiding citizen and have the right to defend myself, that is why I believe in the 2nd amendement. Criminals do believe in the laws and they will find a gun with or without laws. So if you take away my rights, my death and many others will be on the heads of foolish goverment officials who do not know what they are doing. For Obama is out for power not the rights of Americans. I like many Americans was so saddened by the death of the children and adults by the hand of a madman, but I need to be armed and have done so legally, to protect my family. When are we going to hold people responsible and not the objects they use? Maybe we should ban cars, for they kill more people than guns, or how about a baseball bat, or a hammer, or my purse (now that is a deadly weapon). People are responsible for their actions, not objects. Thank you Senator Lee, Eddie Jean Mahurin, a proud American.

Maureen—New York

As a woman a firearm is an equalizer against those bigger and stronger than me. I have the right to protect myself!

Patricia—Nebraska

Living in the Midwest, it allows me self-protection of property and family. We live in the country and there are only limited law enforcement here with extremely long response times. We need the ability to defend ourselves against the ever increasing influx of crime.

We are also very much of the belief that the Constitution guarantees our right to bear arms to protect us from tyranny—politicians in power who seek to do our country harm.

It is your obligation to uphold our rights as per the Constitution, as all elected officials took an oath to do just that and We the People will not settle for less . . .

Melissa—Utah

Being a military wife, my husband is away most of the time. I don't believe the federal government should have the power to tell me what I need and don't need in order to keep myself and my family safe. They do not know my comfort level and ability with firearms, so how can they decide what would be best for me to use? That decision should be mine. Whether I decide a rifle or handgun or none at all, is of no concern to anyone else. Controlling me will not keep anyone else safe from criminals. It will only make me less safe.

Our constitutional liberties should never be up for a vote. This whole thing is quite disturbing.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF SARAH JEWELL TO BE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Sally Jewell, of Washington, to be Secretary of the Interior.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 hours of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the nomination.

The senior Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this afternoon we will take up in the Senate the confirmation of Sally Jewell to head the Department of the Interior. The Department is one of America's biggest landowners and is the second largest source of revenue for the Treasury after the Internal Revenue Service. The Department of Interior has the unique mission of protecting America's treasures while pursuing balanced approaches to promote sustainable economic development.

The Department administers the Outer Continental Shelf Program, which is vital to the gulf coast, and Oregon's forest lands in southwestern Oregon where we are pushing hard to increase forest health because we know forest health equals a healthy economy.

The Department has significant trust responsibilities for Native Americans, and it manages water reclamation projects throughout the West. Public lands, which are administered by the Department, are a lifeline for our ranchers, and they are especially important given the recent droughts our country has experienced.

In addition to these traditional responsibilities, increasingly the Department of the Interior is responsible for providing recreational opportunities for millions of our citizens. Today millions of Americans use these lands to hunt, camp, fish, hike, and boat. Let's make no mistake about it. Outdoor recreation is now a major economic engine for our country, generating more than $645 billion of revenue each year.

This is why I am especially enthused today to be able to strongly recommend Sally Jewell to head the Department of the Interior. She has exceptional qualifications. Somehow she has managed to pack into just one lifetime two or three lifetimes of experiences. She has been a petroleum engineer, corporate CEO, a banker, and a citizen volunteer. Her qualifications clearly made an impression on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which I chair. Last month our members voted 19 to 3 to approve her nomination, and I believe she got that resounding vote because she is the right person to oversee the multitude of programs at the Department of the Interior, several of which I have just mentioned. She certainly made clear in her confirmation hearing that she understands there is an enormous responsibility to balance the dual roles of conserving and developing resources.

I think we all understand that jobs in our country come from the private sector, and if through this Department we can come up with innovative, fresh policies to set the climate for job growth while we protect our treasures, that is clearly going to be good for the United States of America.

Let's look at a few of the areas where she is going to be involved. Natural gas is just one. This resource has been a huge, positive development for our country. We have it, the world wants it, our prices are lower, and we are seeing a significant interest among American manufacturers in bringing jobs back home. I know this has been of great interest to the Presiding Officer today. A lot of these manufacturers are saying they want to come back from overseas because America has a price advantage in terms of clean natural gas.

There are significant environmental questions associated with natural gas. We have already talked about them in our committee. We are going to have to deal with fracking issues and methane emissions and underground aquifers. Based on some of the discussions we have had—and we had a very good dialog between Frances Beinecke of the Natural Resources Defense Council and Senator HOEVEN from North Dakota where they have a significant interest in natural gas—I believe that under Sally Jewell, when it comes to our public lands, we are going to be able to strike the kind of responsible balance that will make sense for the Senate in a bipartisan way.

I see my friend and colleague Senator MURKOWSKI is here. She has more than met me halfway as we have tried to look at the issues associated with these questions, such as natural gas.

I will only say that with someone with the brains and energy and the willingness to reach out that Sally Jewell has—and she certainly did that based on the number of visits she made to Senators—we may be able to have a natural gas policy where we can have it all, where we can have modest prices for our businesses and consumers that make for a significant economic advantage, we can bring back some of those industries from overseas to Oregon and Ohio and other parts of the country, and we can do it by using, for example, best practices on our public lands as it relates to managing these resources. But we will only have a chance to accomplish those kinds of things if we have someone with Sally Jewell's talents and professional track record of actually bringing people together on these kinds of issues.

I do not believe you can run a multi-billion-dollar company, such as REI, which has been Ms. Jewell's current position, without showing the ability to manage, to bring people together, and in particular to anticipate some of the exciting trends in the days ahead in terms of outdoor recreation, where we all have enjoyed the American tradition of the great outdoors. I think few thought it would be a $646 billion contributor to the American economy. But that happens because individuals like Ms. Jewell are willing to step up to take these positions. Because she is from our part of the world in the Pacific Northwest, we are particularly pleased to see her secure this position.

But, again, you do not run—and run well—a nearly $2 billion outdoor equipment company, as Ms. Jewell has, by osmosis but because you are a good manager, you are good with people, and in particular you understand what the challenges are all about.

At this point, I would like to give some time to my friend and colleague. I know that Washington Senators are very interested in being part of this debate, and before we wrap up this afternoon, I also would like to talk about the wonderful track record of Ms. Jewell's predecessor, our current Secretary, Secretary Salazar, who is Senator MURKOWSKI's and my personal friend.

For purposes of this part of the discussion, I would only like to say to the Senate that in Sally Jewell we will have an individual with the experience and with the expertise and the drive to lead the Department of the Interior. I believe she will listen to Senators who have concerns, listen to Senators who want, as Senator MURKOWSKI and so many in our committee have tried to do, to find common ground. So I strongly urge the Senate today, when we vote a little bit later on, to join me in voting to approve Sally Jewell's nomination for the Department of the Interior.

I will now be happy to yield to my friend and colleague from Alaska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Alaska is recognized.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I follow my colleague from Oregon, the chairman of the Energy Committee, here in discussing the qualifications of the nominee for Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell. We recognize as westerners that this is an appointment, this is a position that has great significance, great meaning to our States, so we pay attention to these nominees, we pay attention to who is the Secretary of the Interior.

I have taken the position that our constitutional responsibility for advice and consent should begin with very thoughtful questions on our part, and then, absent any seriously disqualifying factors, we should conclude with the confirmation of the President's nominees. Our obligation to get answers to our questions is always a serious one, and the duty weighs most heavily when the interests of our constituents are directly at stake.

I mention the impact the Department of the Interior has particularly on our Western States—our States that have so much in public lands, our States where we have national forests, where we have BLM lands, rangelands, refuge lands. In Alaska and really in many parts across the West, the Federal Government's biggest and most prominent role is really that of a landlord. Sometimes you have a good relationship with your landlord, and other times it feels as if the landlord won't even let you put a nail in the wall to hang a picture. So, again, we look very critically and very carefully at this position.

In several States, the Federal Government controls the majority of the land. In Alaska, 64 percent of the State is controlled from here in Washington, DC. So that means an individual who may have an inholding in some Federal land basically has to get permission to get to his or her inholding within a park. It is almost hard for many of my colleagues to believe that so much of what it is we do has to go through this process of approval, but that is our reality.

In Alaska, with the Federal ownership, there are more than 230 million acres that are held in Federal ownership. That is an area which is larger than the State of Texas. We always like to compare ourselves—Alaska to Texas—but the fact is that the Federal public lands in Alaska are larger than the size of the State of Texas. We have over 57 million acres of wilderness. That is about the size of the State of Minnesota. And that is just sitting in my State.

The proportion of Federal land in Alaska is exceeded only by that of our colleagues from Nevada. The majority leader and Senator HELLER remind us quite frequently the Federal lands held in their State are at about 85 percent.

So when you think about what this does, the Federal land classifications that we have to deal with, oftentimes it not only severely restricts the usage of Federal lands by our people, but as a practical matter they restrict the use of State and private lands too.

So, again, the Secretary of the Interior is important to the future of a State such as Alaska and the West, but really, as it relates to other Cabinet members, this is one to which we are going to pay serious attention.

I had occasion to come to this floor several months ago to discuss a decision that came out of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In that decision, they somehow found cause to oppose a single-lane gravel road, 10 miles, that would connect the community of King Cove—near the Aleutians—connect it to the smaller community of less than 100 people of Cold Bay. The reason for the need to connect these two communities is Cold Bay has the second longest runway in the State of Alaska. King Cove, on the other hand, where most of the people live—about 900-some-odd Native Alaskans—has an airport that is dicey at best. We have seen accidents, we have seen lives lost as folks have tried to leave King Cove for medical services.

It was an issue that, for me and for the people of King Cove, was far beyond a discussion about what happens when you put a small road through a refuge. For the people of King Cove, this was about safety, this was about life and safety, and they felt they were not being heard by their Federal landlord. The agencies had not heard the people. In fact, the Department had not heard the people. Now, they had listened to the biologists and they had gotten that message, but the people had not been heard.

So through a series of very lengthy discussions with Secretary Salazar, through a series of conversations with the nominee Sally Jewell, and through the impassioned words of many of the people of King Cove, who traveled over 4,000 miles to come here to Washington, DC, to knock on the door of the Secretary and say: Please hear our voices, there has been an accommodation, there has been an agreement reached. And I appreciate my colleague, the chairman, helping us with this. The Department of the Interior has agreed to have the new Secretary as well as the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs review the public health and safety impacts of the decision to build this road.

But I think it is important that folks understand this wasn't a parochial issue I was raising here on the floor. I kept referring to it as the King Cove issue, but it is not one single issue, and it is not parochial. It is obvious to the people of Alaska why this was such a considerable deal, why it was so important the people of King Cove be heard. For them, it was not just about a road, it was an issue of overreach. It was a symbol of Federal overreach on way too many policies we see come out of the Department and the harm that causes across our Nation.

The reality is so many of us, particularly those in the Western States, have our own King Cove. We all have those instances when issues have come up, where the people from the States we represent have to go knocking on the door of some Federal agency for permission, have to try to navigate a morass of regulations, and they do not feel as though they are being heard. Every day we have Federal restrictions making it harder for local people to live and to prosper.

I made a big effort to make sure the incoming Secretary of the Interior not only understood the particulars of King Cove—and I welcome the opportunity to travel with her when she comes to Alaska and flies out to King Cove hopefully at the end of the summer—for her not only to understand this issue but for her to understand the bigger role she will assume as Secretary of the Interior and how important it is for her to listen to all sides and to listen to the people she represents. As Secretary of the Interior, she is the one to implement that special trust responsibility the Federal Government has to our first people, to our Native people, so she needs to see and hear for herself.

She also needs to fully understand what she has in front of her—as Senator WYDEN mentioned, the massive public lands that will be under her jurisdiction as Secretary, understanding what that means to ranchers and farmers and those who are the recreators in our national parks, to those who will harvest timber, to those who will use our lands in the manner in which they are intended—multiple use—for her to fully understand what it means to be the custodian, the landlord of our amazing public lands in this country. We all need to be working with her.

I have no question about Ms. Jewell's intelligence and her competence as a manager. I have been very impressed with what I have seen as her level of sincerity with her very distinguished private sector career. It has been noted that she has probably spent more time in Alaska prior to coming to the Department of Interior than any other nominee outside of Walter Hickel, who was our former Governor and served as Secretary of the Interior. So she gives me comfort with that, knowing that she understands much of what we have to deal with in Alaska.

These are all important qualities as we think about her competence as a manager, as we think about her intelligence. But dealing with an agency the size, the scope, and the complexity of the Department of Interior really requires the ability to focus not only on the debates and conflicts that we are facing today, but it is going to require an understanding of how we got here, the fact that the debates and conflicts of today often are based on years, decades, perhaps even centuries of history. Those who are steeped in this history raise the importance of the Secretary understanding the context for the many difficult decisions that will be made.

I had an opportunity to ask a lot of questions of Sally Jewell not only in our private meeting but before the committee and then also in writing. I asked questions about my questions. I wanted to be thorough. And I do concede that Ms. Jewell will be on a learning curve as she assumes the position of Secretary. But in her answers to questions at the hearing and in her written submissions, she has pointed out her experience and her skill at bringing diverse groups of people together to solve difficult problems on which they have been divided historically, and I do take her at her word there. I will certainly commit to participating in that dialog and to bringing all of my fellow western constituents with me, whether it is literally or figuratively. I believe that is important.

Ms. Jewell has used the word ''convener'' when describing herself, and I think this will be a very important task and role that she will assume. There are conflicting groups and conflicting interests, and Ms. Jewell has spoken to how she has reconciled that in the past with her previous work experience, not only at REI but at other places, and I do believe she has the skill sets to accomplish just that.

So with this commitment she has made to me and to others on the committee, I will certainly take the view that the fact that Ms. Jewell has perhaps not been through the full gamut of the conflicts that surround so much of what happens within Interior, perhaps that is a good thing because perhaps she is able to look at some of these issues through a fresh perspective, a different lens. Perhaps because she is not so embedded in the history, she will be able to look at this anew. And I think that is good. I think that is a positive. I certainly will look forward to engaging substantively with her as we complete this process—and beyond—on these issues, on how she can really bring her problem-solving skills to bear in a way that will serve all Americans.

I think it is telling—and it was noted in the Energy Committee hearing by one of our colleagues—that Ms. Jewell brings to the table as the nominee for the Secretary of Interior a business background that is quite considerable. She is a petroleum engineer who has actually fracked a well, so she has experience there. She has experience in Alaska and worked on the beginning portion of how we built out the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. She did it from the Seattle area but has that skill set as well.

It was asked somewhat tongue-in-cheek by one of my colleagues on the Republican side: Well, you have all these great characteristics. Why would President Obama select you?

So I think it is important to recognize that we have before us a nominee who brings a unique set of skill sets and experiences to us that I am hopeful will be beneficial. This is important to me as an Alaskan, to know we have someone who will be a listener, who will be a convener, who will work to solve problems. I am looking forward to the opportunity to spend time in Alaska with her as she visits with the people up north to better understand some of the challenges we face and hopefully work with us on these issues that are so critically important.

I appreciate the good work of my colleague and the chairman of the committee in getting us to this point so that we can move Ms. Jewell's nomination forward. I look forward to supporting her and working with her during her tenure as Secretary of the Interior.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Washington State is recognized.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues and urge them to vote in support of Sally Jewell, who has been nominated to serve as Interior Secretary. I thank Senator WYDEN for all of his work in moving her through this process to today. I was thrilled when President Obama nominated Sally for this position, and I couldn't be more excited to support her confirmation.

Sally is going to come to the Department of the Interior at a difficult time for our country. As a nation, we are working very hard to protect our environment and invest in new technologies to meet our energy demands. And on the local level, including in my home State of Washington, Sally is going to face some complex issues, such as protecting tribal lands and

treaty rights. But I can think of no one better prepared for this task than Sally.

After she studied at the University of Washington to become an engineer, Sally left the Northwest for the oilfields of Oklahoma and Colorado, where she learned about the energy sector from the inside out. She moved from the outdoors—as you can see from this picture—to the boardroom and spent nearly two decades in finance helping businesses grow and learning what it takes to succeed in the marketplace.

Time and again, Sally has broken the mold to take on tough tasks—often in male-dominated industries. When she joined Recreational Equipment, Incorporated, the Seattle-based outdoor retailer, it was struggling. But after 8 years with Sally as CEO, REI is now thriving, topping $1 billion in sales, while leading the charge to protect our environment. And finding that balance—navigating the business world while keeping REI's commitment to the outdoors—is what will make Sally great as our next Interior Secretary. Perhaps better than anyone, Sally knows that businesses and the environment both benefit when we are committed to protecting our national parks and promoting our national treasures. At REI, Sally has proven that sustainability and responsibility make sense for the environment and the company's bottom line.

In Washington State, she has worked closely with me to help create the Wild Sky Wilderness area and expand our other important environmental protections throughout our State. She has worked with industry and environmentalists to expand recreational opportunities throughout the Northwest and has helped us work toward permanently protecting BLM lands in the San Juan Islands, where my colleague Senator MARIA CANTWELL was at the forefront. That is truly a gem of Washington State and has recently been declared a national monument.

Sally has backed crucial public-private partnerships that create jobs through recreation, and she has supported groundbreaking programs to get young people involved in the outdoors.

So whether it is our forest lands in the Northwest or mineral deposits in the Southwest or oil reserves along our coastlines, Sally is going to lead an Interior Department where economic growth and long-term sustainability go hand in hand.

I am here today to urge my colleagues to vote in support of Sally Jewell, and I am really pleased she has been nominated. Again, I thank Senator WYDEN for all of his work in getting her to this point in this process.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington State is recognized.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I join my colleagues from the Northwest who have come to the floor this afternoon to speak in support of the nomination of Sally Jewell as Secretary of the Interior. Like my colleagues from the Northwest, I wish to express how much we appreciate her willingness to serve and how proud we are of her legacy and interests in a variety of issues so far.

Obviously, the Department of the Interior is so important to us, with its broad range of services, including everything from our national parks, to wildlife refuge, to offshore drilling lease management, to the important science done by the USGS Service, and many other things. In fact, I read somewhere kind of humorously that the Department of the Interior was called the Department of Everything Else.

As a nominee, Ms. Jewell came before our committee. I thank her family for their willingness to support her in her efforts to come to Washington, DC, because Sally is the exact type of leadership we need at the Department of the Interior. She represents a balanced person who not only knows how to help a growing business, as she did, she has served on the university board of regents and also worked on the nonpartisan National Conservation Parks Association. She has done everything in business, from dealing with oilfields in Oklahoma to commercial banking to, of late, running REI, one of our most successful companies in the Pacific Northwest. I know she has the kind of leadership it takes to figure out these issues about best use of public lands or the vigorous challenges the Department faces when it comes to modernizing the bureaucracy or thinking about climate change at the same time you are talking about deepwater drilling. There are a myriad of things we have to forge through, and Sally Jewell is the right person with the right balance to get that done.

Having grown up in Washington, where over 40 percent of our lands is in public land, I know Sally understands these western issues, whether it is water rights or salmon recovery or understanding the impact on water levels, the fire season, wildlife on BLM lands, or the importance of access to hunting and fishing. I guarantee, because she grew up there, Sally Jewell understands these issues. I know she has been involved in many organizations to express that, and that has been a good training ground for her.

I am confident, because she is a trained engineer, she is going to bring a very pragmatic, can-do attitude to the Interior Department's management and problem-solving efforts.

I know science will be her compass, and I know she is not going to have an ideological bent, but she is going to have a ''get it done'' mentality.

Given the importance of the Interior Department's agencies and very challenging mission, I am excited we are going to have somebody with a business background and a science background at the Department of the Interior.

I hope our colleagues will vote today to move Ms. Jewell out of the Senate so we can get her into the Department of the Interior so she can begin this important job and continue to move our Nation's agenda forward.

As the chairwoman of the Indian Affairs Committee I look forward to working with Ms. Jewell on all the issues related to Indian Country as well. There is much to accomplish and much to address. I think her background is exactly what we need in the Department. I hope my colleagues will move quickly on this issue.

I thank the chairman, Senator WYDEN, for his leadership in moving her nomination through the process.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, before she leaves I want to thank Senator CANTWELL for all her good work. As northwesterners know, and I hope the rest of the country knows, Senator CANTWELL is one of those who understands the opportunity in the great outdoors. I know she is climbing a mountain this summer and is always in shape. She is always fit and ready for a mountain.

To have the opportunity to work with folks in the Pacific Northwest, particularly with Sally Jewell's background, as the Senator has eloquently outlined, I think it is going to be an advantage not just for our region but for the rest of our country.

I see our colleague from New Mexico is here. If he would like to make some remarks at this point, we welcome him. I have some additional remarks as well.

Would my colleague from New Mexico like to make any remarks at this time?

All right.

Let me, then, talk for just a few more minutes about Ms. Jewell and some of the challenges ahead of her, particularly in natural resources. Obviously, with authorities, as my colleagues have outlined, that range from managing national parks, to offshore oil and gas development, to protecting fish and wildlife, serving as Secretary of the Interior, it is almost like an extreme sport for multitaskers. You are going to have to juggle. Ms. Jewell knows a little bit about multitasking, as we have outlined, from being a petroleum engineer, a CEO, a conservationist, and a banker.

Particularly in my part of the world, Oregon, there are some especially important challenges. The Federal Government owns most of our land. Particularly in forestry, we need to find a way to bring together all sides—timber owners, environmentalists, scientists—and we need to go in there and clean out millions and millions of acres of overstocked timber stands. We can get that material to the mills. It is an ideal source of biomass, a clean source of energy.

Because we are working to build relationships with the environmental community, we can also find a way to protect old growth as we get to harvest

timber. But it is, again, not going to happen just by osmosis or because somebody waves a wand in Washington, DC. It is going to happen because we have responsible administrators like Sally Jewell who are going to take the time to learn the checker-board pattern of O&C lands and our local communities, and particularly understand some of our traditions that have worked particularly well in the past and I think can be of great benefit as we look to future solutions.

Back in 2000 I had the honor of writing the secure rural schools bill and the timber payments bill with our former colleague, Senator Larry Craig. What we included in that legislation is the kind of model for collaborative forestry that we are going to see Sally Jewell pick up on. We established something called resource advisory councils where, in effect, on the local level people from the timber industry, people from the environmental community, scientists, and a whole host of others—frankly, some people who as a general rule had not done much talking to each other, probably done a lot of litigating against each other—they would use these resource advisory councils to come together and try to find some common ground.

It worked. Regarding these resource advisory councils, when I meet people from the timber industry, from any of the extractive industries, and environmental folks, they say: Use that model. Use that collaborative model that we are seeing used in timberlands in southwestern Oregon as a way that we can build on the opportunity to bring people together.

We have been able to do that with Forest Service lands in eastern Oregon to some extent. I think we can do it also in western Oregon and in the communities that are affected by the Bureau of Land Management lands. Probably to do it we are going to have to extend the timber payments law for another year to give us the time to come up with a long-term solution. I have talked about this with Sally Jewell in the past and about her willingness to see that this is an issue that now finally has to be addressed, addressed in a way that will get the timber harvest up in O&C lands but also protect our treasures. Our old growth is some of the very pristine treasures of America. If we do not figure out a way to promote forest health and go in there and thin out these overstocked stands, these fires that we are seeing—they are not natural fires, they are really magnets for infernos because of years and years of neglect—are going to continue.

I think Sally Jewell is up to the challenge of coming up with the kind of policies for the O&C lands, for the lands in eastern Oregon and those my colleagues talked about in Montana and Colorado and Idaho, and I think she is up to that challenge.

Before we wrap up today I want to take a few minutes and talk about—I know the Presiding Officer has great affection for him as well—our former colleague, Ken Salazar. Ken Salazar has been Secretary of the Interior throughout the Obama administration to date. It is my view he has done an exceptional job. I think we all understand in the Senate that when Ken Salazar is involved, get ready for a great smile, an enormous amount of energy, enormous amount of intelligence, and someone who, in a very persistent way, is interested in solving problems. Ken Salazar has sure done that in a number of important areas.

For example, before Ken Salazar took office—I am looking at a headline from when there was a huge scandal at the Department of the Interior. I am looking at an article from the fall of 2008 headlined, ''Sex, Drug Use and Graft Cited In The Interior Department.''

Basically, what it talks about is an investigation, a number of reports delivered by the inspector general, that basically document, at the Department of the Interior, a culture of lax ethics. It basically describes something like a dozen current and former employees of the Minerals Management Service, an agency that collected at that time billions of dollars of royalties annually—you basically had an ''anything goes'' kind of environment, and the reports go on and on. It feels more like a litany for a late-night television show.

The reports focused on a culture of substance abuse and promiscuity in what was the Service's royalty and in-kind program—essentially, officials who seemed to be exempt from expense accounts limits, one ethical lapse after another, as documented in these reports. I remember at the hearing, the confirmation hearing, Senator Salazar—it was unusual because he had been my seatmate over the years at the Senate Energy Committee—I said: Senator Salazar, you have to go in there and drain the swamp at the Minerals Management Service.

In fact, he certainly did that. Essentially, the successor agency has been free of scandal. I think that is representative of both the integrity and professionalism that Secretary Salazar has brought to the agency.

Also, I note after the gulf spill he overhauled the offshore drilling practices, ensured that they were beefed up in terms of safety while at the same time allowing for the drilling that is so important to the industry.

I am also going to reflect on Secretary Salazar's accomplishments, mention that he has done yeoman work in terms of promoting green and renewable energy. I note in one of the comments about his departure that Christy Goldfuss, Public Lands Director at the Center for American Progress, stated Secretary Salazar championed ''a new model of conservation which focused on partnerships with private land owners and States'' and ''that approach has paid off with cooperatives in the Everglades in Florida, the Prairie Potholes region of the Dakotas, and other areas.''

I would like to note something else as well about Secretary Salazar. I know Senators on both sides of the aisle would call him when they had those kinds of resource questions. I know Senator MURKOWSKI brought up one of Secretary Salazar's final acts in office today. Under his leadership the State of Idaho and the Fish and Wildlife Service entered into an arrangement so that the State of Idaho's plan for addressing the sage grouse could be implemented. I know this is a critical issue for Senator RISCH. He and I talked about it often. I am going to work with him on these issues, and what Secretary Salazar did today is an example of the new kind of partnership that we all are looking to the Interior Department and the states for, and certainly something I want to promote, and I know Senator MURKOWSKI shares that view.

I think it is fair to say that Sally Jewell has very large boots to fill. We all remember Secretary Salazar's wonderful western boots and the anecdotes about them. She has certainly got a challenge to try to step in after a Secretary who has accomplished so much. But as I and Senator MURKOWSKI and the Washington Senators have outlined today, we believe strongly that Sally Jewell is up to this challenge. I hope she will receive a resounding vote in the Senate. I believe we are close to the point where we will be able to vote on Ms. Jewell.

For all the reasons that I and my colleagues have outlined this afternoon, I hope there will be very strong bipartisan support for Ms. Jewell when we vote.

With that I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for a quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent all remaining time on the Jewell nomination be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. All time is yielded back.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

There is a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Sarah Jewell, of Washington, to be Secretary of the Interior?

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 87, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 94 Ex.]

YEAS—87

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Baucus	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson
Bennet	Harkin	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Boozman	Heitkamp	Reed
Boxer	Heller	Reid
Brown	Hirono	Risch
Burr	Hoeven	Roberts
Cantwell	Inhofe	Sanders
Cardin	Isakson	Schatz
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Coats	Kaine	Shaheen
Cochran	King	Shelby
Collins	Kirk	Stabenow
Coons	Klobuchar	Tester
Corker	Landrieu	Thune
Cornyn	Leahy	Toomey
Cowan	Levin	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cruz	McCain	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wicker
Flake	Mikulski	Wyden

NAYS—11

Barrasso	Fischer	Rubio
Chambliss	Johanns	Scott
Coburn	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—2

Lautenberg	Rockefeller

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

SAFE COMMUNITIES, SAFE SCHOOLS ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, tomorrow at 11 o'clock we are going to vote on cloture on the motion to proceed to the gun legislation that is now before this body.

This morning and throughout the day, our friend from Connecticut spoke, a freshman Senator who was brought to the Senate with this tragedy having taken place shortly after he arrived. My friend the Presiding Officer, a longtime attorney general, the chief law enforcement officer of the State of Connecticut, has lived with this tragedy that happened at Sandy Hook like nothing that ever happened in his career. And, of course, for Senator HEINRICH, a new Senator, this was something he never appreciated he would be faced with.

I saw the pictures today of those little babies who were murdered, some of them shot multiple times—little tiny kids shot multiple times. The shooting was on December 14, about 4 months ago—120 days. So the time has come—it has arrived—when we have to debate this issue. We have to have a response to this tragedy.

When this incident took place on December 14, it struck me, as it did everyone in America—virtually everyone in America; we had been through Aurora, CO—that vicious, brutal machine-gunning of people going to watch a movie, and then little kids getting killed in an elementary school, kindergartners, first-graders—so we need to respond, this great deliberative body, to what the American people want. So we are going to vote. It is time to vote. I hope we get cloture on this matter. We certainly should. After that, there is no reason not to start legislating immediately. I hope we do not have to go through this procedural mishmash—30 hours; somebody on the floor all the time; if people are not, there are dilatory tactics; only one quorum call—and all this. Let's get past that. If somebody has something to say, come and say it. But this week we are going to start legislating. We are going to start legislating whether there is cloture or not. One will be a little longer process. But we are going to start legislating on this bill this week. I hope we can get to it tomorrow.

I do not think it is any secret, if we are on this bill, I am going to—the first amendment in order will be the amendment to change the background checks that has been worked on for weeks by Senator MANCHIN, Senator KIRK, and Senator TOOMEY, and then we will decide where we go from there.

To all my friends, we are going to have amendments. Some of them are going to take a little bit of time. We are not going to finish the bill this week. I do not know if we will finish it next week. But that really does not matter. Are we going to legislate the right way? Are we going to legislate? I have in my mind these little children who were murdered. What we do here is not going to prevent all gun violence in America, but if we stop a few, isn't that remarkably important for us to do? I think we can do a lot more than saving the lives of just a few people.

But let's work on this bill. We are going to start. If we have to use up the 30 hours, we will use up the 30 hours. I think there are ways around that procedurally. I hope we do not have to test that. There are a number of amendments. We all know. We have been reading about them. There are lots of amendments; people have been waiting a long time for this legislation.

One of my Republican colleagues yesterday said: I have a number of germane amendments I want to offer.

I said: Fine. Good. Do it.

We know we have to do background checks, assault weapons, the ammunition capacity of clips or magazines, mental health. That is just to name a few of the things. And I repeat, we are going to begin this process before we leave here this week.

I so appreciate the work done by Senators MANCHIN, TOOMEY, KIRK, and many others. My friend Senator SCHUMER has been working on this issue. My friend DICK DURBIN, who has been involved in guns for a long time, has been involved. I appreciate the work of everyone. As the press has indicated, we are likely going to get cloture on this tomorrow. I hope so. But, as I have told individual Senators, if we do not get cloture, we are going to have a vote in the Senate on capacity clips, assault weapons, background checks, and some mental health items or item. That we are going to do. I hope we can do it in the regular process.

We have had people for a long time now—my friends on the other side of the aisle—saying: We want regular order. We want to be able to offer amendments. Well, I do too. And I hope people will not see how many amendments they can offer, not see if they can set a record for how many amendments can be laid down, because we should have this as a civil process and culminating in a better set of laws for our people in this great country in which we live.

For those of us who have the opportunity to try to address this issue, I hope we all understand that the world is watching what we do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

NOMINATION OF SRI SRINIVASAN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, earlier this afternoon I had the opportunity, the honor, to chair a hearing of the Senate Judiciary Committee, on which we both serve, to consider the President's nomination of a highly qualified lawyer, Sri Srinivasan, to serve on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals.

I am encouraged by what the majority leader has just said about the very real possibility that we will get a vote on the floor of this Senate on vital and important issues affecting guns, immigration, and other issues, but what I speak to today is the absolutely essential role this Senate must fill of voting on qualified judges who have been nominated to the circuit courts of the United States.

Earlier today at this hearing, 10 of our colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, asked thoughtful questions, and Mr. Srinivasan gave thorough and thoughtful answers. I came away convinced that he has the background, the education, the skills, and, most importantly, the temperament to serve as a circuit court judge. And I was encouraged by comments of my colleagues, both Republican and Democratic, that they too were inclined to support this nomination.

Under normal historical circumstances, today's hearing would be the beginning of a deliberate, timely, orderly process—a process required of this body by article II, section 2 of our Constitution by which we advise and consent to the President's nominations.

We should, of course, carefully consider the qualifications of candidates and not serve as some rubberstamp, but neither should we be a firewall blocking qualified nominees from serving. Unfortunately, for some number of years, this Senate has, in some vital instances, served more as a firewall than as an advise and consent body. Instead of doing our due diligence with appropriate speed, we have seen delays, stalling tactics, and in some instances filibusters of highly qualified nominees.

Five years into President Obama's administration, the courts are still nearly 10 percent vacant. In my view, our courts should be above politics. When the President of either party submits a highly qualified candidate of good character and sound legal mind, absent exceptional circumstances, that candidate is entitled to a vote.

The actions or in this case inaction of the Senate with regard to the DC Circuit have consequences. The DC Circuit Court of Appeals has a series of vacancies, the result of which, in my view, are to delay and deny justice for Americans far beyond the boundaries of this District of Columbia.

The DC Circuit Court is often called the second most important in the Nation, because, like the Supreme Court, it handles cases that impact Americans all over our country. Regularly, it hears cases on issues ranging from terrorism and detention to the scope of Federal agency power. Yet it is critically understaffed. This circuit court has not seen a nominee confirmed since President George W. Bush's fourth nominee to that court was confirmed in 2006. Today, more than 1,500 days after President Obama has taken office, 4 of the 11 seats on the DC Circuit are open, making it more than one-third vacant and putting the remaining judges under undue strain to decide the complex and important cases before this court.

Contrary to the previous administration, this administration was recently recognized by the New York Times Editorial Board as putting forward nominees who are decidedly moderate. President Obama first nominated for this vacancy on this court the exceptionally qualified Caitlin Halligan, who waited more than 900 days for a simple up-or-down vote on the floor of this Chamber. She came with the American Bar Association's highest rating, glowing recommendations from bipartisan supporters, and a diverse legal career marked by distinctive service as New York's solicitor general. Nevertheless, sadly, Republican Senators successfully filibustered her nomination, and last month President Obama reluctantly withdrew Ms. Halligan from consideration.

We have today a chance for a fresh start with Mr. Srinivasan, who would serve equally well and ably on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. As he demonstrated in today's hearing, he has a sharp and capable legal mind. He has served in the Solicitor General's office for both Republican and Democratic administrations. He has served in the private sector and the public sector and has earned bipartisan support from those who have worked with him.

In fact, he has been endorsed publicly in a letter from 12 former Solicitors General and Principal Deputy Solicitors General, six Democrats, six Republicans, for those who have served in Democratic and Republican administrations.

The letter, signed by conservative legal luminaries such as Paul Clement and Ted Olson, notes Mr. Srinivasan is ''one of the best appellate lawyers in the country,'' with an ''unsurpassed'' work ethic who is ''extremely well prepared to take on the intellectual rigors of serving on the D.C. Circuit.''

At the same time, throughout the course of his career in private practice and as a public servant, he has represented clients with causes diverse enough that any individual policymaker or elected official is likely to disagree with some of them, including me. I disagree with a position he argued in Rumsfeld v. Padilla in support of the idea that the government has a right to detain U.S. citizens indefinitely, but I do not ascribe that position to him.

One of the most foundational principles of our legal system is that we do not ascribe to the attorney the position which he successfully and vigorously advocates on behalf of his client. I will not block his nomination simply because I might disagree with the position he took on behalf of a client in one case.

Sri, in my view, is a highly capable attorney, with the character and demeanor to serve on the bench. I will strongly support his nomination. I am following in this instance the wisdom of Chief Justice Roberts, who has said: ''It's a tradition of the American Bar that goes back before the founding of our nation that lawyers are not identified with the positions of their clients.''

So I say to my colleagues, let's move forward in that spirit. Let's return to our historic constitutionally mandated role. Let's give Mr. Srinivasan a speedy up-or-down vote, which I believe he has earned with decades of public service and public sector experience.

To be honest, if this nomination cannot move forward, if this nomination is filibustered for what can only be political reasons, I cannot imagine what nomination could move forward to this court. A filibuster of this nomination would sadly prove to me, just as it did to those of the other party in 2005, that the judicial nomination standards and procedures at work are unworkable, the system is broken, and it would lead to a reconsideration.

There was a crisis of this sort when the parties were of opposite configuration in 2005 that led the majority to threaten the so-called nuclear option to end judicial filibusters by the party in which I serve, a result that was avoided only at the last moment for the good of the Senate and the Nation. I urge my colleagues to come together to give this good man a vote and avoid another such crisis today.

Let's do our job so the judges of the DC Circuit Court of Appeals can do theirs for the people of our Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

GAO DUPLICATION REPORT

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I would note to my colleague from the State of Delaware, if I heard him correctly, we just now have had a hearing on a nominee for the DC Circuit Court. He is not even on the Executive Calendar because he has not even been voted out of the Judiciary Committee. So the Senator makes a lot of great points. But I think the fact we are talking about a potential judge who has not even cleared the Judiciary Committee yet may be a bit premature.

He will get a fair hearing. I think we have noted that more judicial nominees were approved in the last two Congresses than the two Congresses before under the last 4 years of the Bush administration.

I rise to say this evening there has been a lot in the news. One thing that has not been in the news very much is the third and final report of the Government Accountability Office in terms of looking at duplication within the Federal Government.

I hope as the American people listen to this, they will take a couple things away. No. 1, we have a great organization called the Government Accountability Office. They have done a wonderful job. We mandated this 4 years ago. They have been on time with their reports. What they have shown us has been tremendously revealing. The first thing I want Americans to note is Congress has failed to act on the first two reports—no substantive action whatsoever.

One significant thing in the Senate was the elimination of the ethanol mandate. With this report today comes an estimated $98 billion a year in savings. What we take by looking at this report could potentially yield us $98 billion in savings by eliminating duplication in what they just found in this one report.

Let me go through it for 1 minute. They found 679 different renewable energy programs across 23 agencies—not across the Energy Department. If we are going to have renewable programs, that is where we should have it. Across 23 different agencies of which we spend $15 billion a year, they found instances where we are giving grants from different agencies to the same projects for the same thing, spending three times as much money as we should be spending on the one project even if we did not have that.

So the potential for us to work our way out of the consequences of the sequester is at our fingertips. Here, drug

abuse prevention and treatment, 76 separate programs, not run through the Department of Health and Human Services, run through 10 different departments with overlap that shows no metrics but multiple agencies having programs doing exactly the same thing: $4.5 billion a year. That is half the size of my Oklahoma State budget a year.

Catfish inspection. I saw in the President's budget today three different agencies where one has to meet the requirements before they can have their catfish inspected. The only thing they did not recommend in the budget today is getting rid of the Agriculture Department. They approve your cheese pizza. But the FDA approves your pepperoni pizza. So if you are a pizza maker, you have to comply with one agency on one type of pizza and another agency on a different type of pizza.

Defense foreign language support. Those are people who come in and help us learn other languages, interpret for us other languages so we can have an effective response and not have a communication error. We have 159 different programs in the Pentagon alone. What they are estimating is that we could save tons of money. We do not know exactly how much it costs because the Pentagon does not know how much they are spending on it, which is another one of the problems.

The GAO report said this week one of the reasons they cannot estimate the savings more accurately is because the majority of the agencies have no idea what they are spending on these programs. The question I have had is, why not? If they do not know what they are spending, why are we not doing something about it?

Higher education assistance: 21 different programs, four different agencies—not all in the Education Department, which is from where I think we would do education assistance, $174.7 billion a year. That includes Pell grants. That includes student loans, the cost associated with student loans.

Veterans employment training. We have six programs, not all of them run by the Veterans Affairs Department but run by the Veterans Affairs Department and other agencies. We are spending $1.2 billion. Here is what we know. We are running these programs, and veterans unemployment, even though they have a skill when they come out of the military, is higher than what the average is in the country. So it is obviously not working.

Also, in the report is something that is very important to me. Let me find it, if I might for a moment. GAO's report exposes a government office that does some good things. It is called the National Technical Information Service. It was established in 1950 and tasked with collecting and distributing certain reports. Despite the fact—here is what GAO found: 75 percent of the information that NTIS supplies, all you have to do is Google it. You do not have to go to NTIS. All you have to do is Google it. So 75 percent of their budget is spent providing reports to other government agencies and other people that you can get with the touch of your iPhone. Why would we continue to do that?

This is just one example that I bring up. We are continuing to fund an agency where three-quarters of what they do has no bearing on it. If it went away, it would not affect us at all. The other thing is they charge other Federal agencies a fee for this information that the other Federal agencies, at a touch of their computer, can get for free.

It is another case of inefficiency. What else did the GAO report show? What the GAO report showed is that we have done nothing of significance in the last 2 years based on what they have recommended we do given their first two reports. Our office calculates, based on the three reports that GAO has given us, that we could save in excess of $250 billion a year if we would follow the recommendations of the Government Accountability Office.

If you are sitting out there wondering why we are having tax proposals increased in the President's budget and that we are having such a hard time with the sequester, you only have to look at one place; that is, Congress. Congress refuses to follow and do the oversight. We have had GAO do a lot of it. We refuse to pass amendments that eliminate duplication. We refuse to make the tough choices. So, consequently, we are spending $250 billion a year—that is $2.5 trillion over 10 years—that we should not be spending.

Where does the money come from to pay for that? It comes from our kids. It doesn't just come in dollars, it comes from a reduced standard of living and limited opportunities in the future because we don't have the courage or the work ethic to address the very real issues which are in front us, on the tips of our fingers, where the money is, where we could actually save money.

We have had almost 1,000 days since the first report came out. We have done one significant thing in the Senate; we have eliminated the ethanol tax credit and saved $6 billion the first year and about $4 to $5 billion afterward. This is the one thing we did. We fought tooth and nail while we did it, but we did it.

This is one bill to save $6 billion in 3 years out of $250 billion. No wonder the confidence level in the Congress is at 13 percent. What we are actually doing is throwing away our kids' future as we fail to address these issues.

When we are spending money we don't have on things we don't absolutely need, and we are borrowing money against our children's future, I can't think of a greater immoral act of the Congress. It is not red hot lit up as some of the more controversial issues such as the gun bill we are doing or immigration; however, I will state it will have a profound effect if we were to address it in terms of the future of our country, the health of our country, and the job-creating capacity for our country.

Yet what is it about your Senator or your Congressman which keeps them from having the courage to challenge the status quo? I know what it is. It is the desire to get reelected by not offending anybody.

We don't have tough oversight hearings. We will not allow bills through committees which actually eliminate waste. There is a bill that has passed the House sitting on the docket right now called the SKILLS Act. It takes 47 job-training programs and puts them into 6. It saves billions of dollars a year and puts metrics on the outcome. We will not even bring it to the floor even though it saves $5 to $6 billion a year in addition to markedly improving the outcome of our job-training programs. It is not here.

It passed the House. The House is doing oversight in every committee right now. The Senate is not.

The House is reading the GAO reports and acting on them. They are not right 100 percent of the time, they are right about 95 percent of the time. Nothing is going to be done about it unless we have an oversight hearing to actually discover information. Nothing actually happens unless we write a bill to change things.

Yet this is not the emphasis in the Senate. There can be no greater emphasis than for us to get out of the financial troubles we are in. There can be no greater emphasis than for us to create an environment which produces jobs in the country when we stop wasting money at the Federal Government level.

Our answer is more government—not less, more. Our answer, according to the President's budget, is more taxes, not less.

I commend the President. He has $25 billion worth of programs he wishes to eliminate in his budget, $25.8 billion. He could send over what the GAO said and eliminate $250 billion a year.

The problems are not really with the President, it is with us: our intransigence to do our job and keep in our focal point what is most important. What is most important is our future and the capability for us to create opportunity in the future for our children and our grandchildren.

I have been fighting this for 8 years. There is a lot of oversight which has been done, tons of reports. The American people are going to eventually learn everything that is in this report because there is an app coming out which will be on people's cell phones very soon, and they may find out anything about everything where the government is wasting money. They will be able to look at an address in their own city and see how much money a company, business, or that farmer received from their Federal tax dollars. They will be able to see that in about 3 months.

When the American people discover our incompetence, it will not matter

that we didn't offend somebody. They are going to see we didn't do our job. We are not doing our job because we are not addressing the things we actually have some control over.

What do we do now? Here is what GAO explains: Although Congress had made some limited progress in addressing the issues we have previously identified, additional steps are needed to address the remaining areas to achieve associated benefits. A number of the issues are difficult but not impossible. Implementing many of the actions will take time and sustained leadership.

The key word there is ''leadership.'' Who is going to lead in the Senate to solve our problems? It is not party identified. Real leadership about solving the real problem is in front of us.

It is time for each congressional committee in the Senate to undertake the waste and overlap identified by GAO within their jurisdiction, begin writing bills to consolidate and eliminate these programs, and put metrics as far as performance on every one of them. It is also time for the White House to put real muscle into their proposal coming in through OMB.

I am thankful we will have a new OMB Director. She will be terrific. She has the skills, dedication, and qualifications. I praise the President for nominating her. She will fly through the Senate because she is superqualified for the job. Also, she knows what she is doing. But it will not matter what she does if we don't respond, if we don't do our work.

GUN CONTROL

Mr. President, I would like to take the time now just to spend a moment or two on the guns issue.

I spent a lot of time over the last few months thinking about Sandy Hook. I actually met with a large number of those people today. I am an A-plus-rated member, a lifetime member of the NRA. I firmly believe in the second amendment, and I firmly believe in the tenth amendment.

We are hearing a lot of politics about the gun situation. What we are not hearing is how do we really keep guns out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them. This is what we need to be addressing.

Whether this would prevent a Sandy Hook, nobody knows. There are some things we do know. What we do know is the vast majority of people who are convicted the first time of a gun crime didn't steal their gun, and they didn't buy it from a federally licensed firearm dealer. They bought it from one of us.

The very fact we are going to have a piece of legislation go through here which will not solve the real problem of keeping guns out of the hands of the mentally impaired and felons is a shame. There are ways we can do that.

I haven't spoken to one owner I know who hasn't agreed with the fact that they would like to know if they sold their gun—they don't want it to go into the hands of a felon or somebody mentally impaired. Yet we are hung up on records. The proposal which comes from Senator TOOMEY, Senator MANCHIN, and Senator KIRK is a step forward. I will not deny it. However, tell me how a record which will only be looked at after a crime is committed is going to help anybody who is a victim of a crime. It is not.

If we really wish to solve this problem, what we need to do is put into the hands of Americans who are law abiding the ability to know they didn't sell their gun to somebody who is on the NTIS list. Give me the ability to know when I sell my gun to a stranger that they are not on that NTIS list.

This has been rejected out of hand because there is no record with it. The reason there doesn't need to be a record is because we are putting an onus on responsible citizens doing the right thing. Also, the government has no right to have a record of when I transfer a gun. They do have a right to expect me to be a responsible citizen when I sell my gun.

The question is, Are we as a body going to take something which is far less than appropriate to actually keep guns out of the hands of felons and mentally impaired and call it a day? This is what is getting ready to happen. Are we going to make a difference and not impair second amendment rights at all and not impair tenth amendment rights because we give States supremacy on that? If they want to give us something more or different, they may.

We are going to go through a great deal of debate and have all these amendments. I thank Senator REID for making it an open amendment process. I called and spoke to him last night. I said I was happy to support going to this bill provided we use the regular Senate procedures and we actually are able to offer amendments which are germane to this bill in any number of ways. He is going to allow this process. I take him at his word he will allow this.

When it is all said and done, will we have made a difference to those families who are wanting us to make a difference? Would we have made a difference?

If we don't allow responsible citizens the ability to know whether they are selling their gun to a felon or a mentally impaired person, we haven't made any difference. We have made a lot of noise, but we haven't made a difference.

Let me tell you why the Toomey-Manchin proposal will not work. The largest gun show in America is in Tulsa, OK. It is called the Wanenmacher Gun Show. Tens of thousands of people come to it twice, maybe three times a year. The sale will be impeded by requiring an FFL license, which is to say a gun dealer at the show will be required to do a background search against the NTIS list for somebody who purchases a gun at the show whether they are buying from that dealer or not.

The first thing which will happen is the Federal firearms licensed dealer will say: I want a fee for transferring this gun, for doing the work—and rightly so. I don't blame him. What is the option?

The option which will happen is the people who are going to make the deal buy the gun. Subsequently, 2 or 3 days after the gun show, they will buy the gun because they will not be at the gun show anymore.

Look at the opposite side of that. If we had a portal or we could get a certificate which says someone is not on the NTIS list and are able to buy a gun anytime, anywhere, somebody selling a gun would have a pin code to make sure their identity is correct and see their ID. Whether a person is in a gun show or outside a gun show, the responsible gun seller will know they didn't sell a gun to somebody mentally impaired or a felon.

We will have all sorts of statements, but what we are going to do isn't going to decrease guns in the hands of felons and the mentally impaired. We can say we need to win. If we want a bill to get through the Senate and get through the House which will actually make a difference in people's lives, that felons and the mentally impaired aren't empowered to buy guns, we need to do something different.

My friends in the second amendment community don't even like my proposal. I understand this. But there is no impairment when all you need to do is go to your cell phone to receive a clearance to know somebody is not on the NTIS list.

We get to decide. Are we going to do it in a way which smells good, looks good, but doesn't do anything? Are we going to fight to do something which actually makes a difference? I hope we choose the latter. I am not convinced we will. The reason Senator MANCHIN couldn't get me to agree to what he had agreed to with Senator TOOMEY is because I don't think it is going to work. I think the vast majority of gun purchasers at gun shows are going to wait to buy them later from the very same people who were going to sell them at a gun show so they do not have to pay a fee and wait 3 or 4 days on a background check. If that happens, what good have we done? How have we made a difference? We haven't.

It is a sad fact, as a practicing physician, and having done training and surgery, I have had to operate on a lot of people who ended up with the consequences of a weapon being used on them.

Oklahoma has a gun culture, and I own multiple guns. I cherish my second amendment right. But with that right comes some responsibility to do the right thing. Liberty without responsibility isn't liberty, and it will not last unless we attach responsibility to it. So if we really believe in the second amendment, and if we really believe in the tenth amendment, we will relook at what we are going to do in terms of

gun transfers. There is a way to do it that will actually make a big difference in people's lives in this country, and it may actually get through the House.

What we are proposing, what we are seeing proposed right now, is never going to pass the House. Consequently, we will have done something in the Senate with no long-term consequences and actually making a difference for the American people.

Mr. President, I thank the Presiding Officer for the time. I yield the floor, and 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. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET THATCHER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher who passed away Monday.

In the 1970s, Britain was mired in debt and even had to go to the IMF for a bailout. Britain was known then as ''The Sick Man of Europe''—how we think of Greece today.

Governments of both political parties had tried to stimulate the economy through Keynesian spending policies and government intervention into the economy was widespread.

Britain faced massive strikes in the winter of 1978–1979, known as the Winter of Discontent. There was talk that Britain had become ungovernable.

Then Margaret Thatcher came on the scene. Her policies of fiscal responsibility and promotion of ''free enterprise'' completely reversed Britain's economic decline. Her foreign policy achievements were no less impressive. This was the era of détente.

Most people accepted that the Soviet Union was strong and successful and was here to stay so we had to learn to live with it. It was fashionable for political leaders to talk as though the Soviet system was just different, but no better or worse than our own.

Margaret Thatcher had no hesitation in pointing out the truth that the Soviet Union and its satellites held their citizens in bondage and she encouraged dissidents who sought freedom. In fact, it was a speech in 1976 when she was still just leader of the opposition in which she warned about the Soviet military buildup that caused a Soviet army newspaper to coin her nickname the ''Iron Lady.''

Together with President Reagan, she sought every opportunity to undermine the Soviet system until it collapsed. If this doesn't sound like a bold position today, it is only because Reagan and Thatcher were proven so profoundly right that everyone now claims to have always agreed.

I should also note that there is a temptation for many people remembering Mrs. Thatcher's legacy to note that she was the first female prime minister of the United Kingdom. While this is a significant historical fact, to mention it as though it was one of her most important accomplishments comes off as patronizing.

Margaret Thatcher rejected the identity politics that is so popular today. She said:

> I've always believed that what matters in politics, as in the rest of life, isn't who you are or where you come from, but what you believe and what you want to do with your life. What matters are your convictions.

Because of her convictions and because she acted on those convictions, she restored Britain's economy, national spirit, and international reputation. Millions of people around the world now live in peace and freedom thanks in large part to her efforts. As a result, Margaret Thatcher is unquestionably one of the most significant leaders of the 20th century.

Mrs. Thatcher's legacy shouldn't simply be relegated to history though. We have a lot to learn from her today. As the President submits his overdue budget this week, I would ask my colleagues to ponder this quote by Margaret Thatcher:

> If spending money like water was the answer to our country's problems, we would have no problems now. If ever a nation has spent, spent, spent and spent again, ours has. Today that dream is over. All of that money has got us nowhere but it still has to come from somewhere.
>
> Those who urge us to relax the squeeze, to spend yet more money indiscriminately in the belief that it will help the unemployed and the small businessman, are not being kind—or compassionate—or caring. They are not the friends of the unemployed or the small business. They are asking us to do again the very thing that caused the problems in the first place.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, are we in a period of morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is on the motion to proceed at this point.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I thought so. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

INAUGURATION OF JOE BERTOLINO

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont is a special place. In a State that abounds in natural beauty, the Kingdom, as many Vermonters affectionately call the State's northeast corner, is heralded for its rural splendor. While the rural character and unspoiled landscape is what defines the Kingdom to many, it is also home to an academic institution that has educated Vermonters for more than 100 years.

Since its founding in 1911, Lyndon State College has served as an economic engine for the region, educating students in a diverse range of academic pursuits. Lyndon has distinguished itself by developing academic programs that mirror the emerging economic needs of the community, such as its first-of-its-kind Mountain Recreation Management program. At the same time, Lyndon remains committed to a liberal arts education and educating students to be well-rounded professionals.

On Friday, April 19, Lyndon State will inaugurate its fifteenth president, Joe Bertolino. Joe comes to Vermont from Hunter College in New York, where he served as vice president for enrollment management and academic affairs. Joe's passion for working with students is evident in his easygoing manner and in how he has engaged students since arriving on campus last summer. At a college of only 1,400 students, Joe's personal touch sets the clear tone that under his leadership Lyndon will be a student-centered institution. Joe has undertaken a number of creative initiatives to build community spirit among Lyndon students and alumni, including an informal policy called ''Go Green, Go Gold,'' that encourages the Lyndon State community to wear the school colors on Wednesdays.

Beyond this personal approach, Joe has laid out an ambitious plan for the college's future. I have had the opportunity to meet Joe during a recent visit to Washington and am encouraged to welcome his energy and creative thinking to Vermont. Lyndon State College is a vital part of Vermont's higher education community, and I wish Joe the best as he is officially inaugurated as the college's next president.

I request unanimous consent that an article from Lyndon State about President Bertolino be printed in the RECORD.

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

LOVING LYNDON

(By Leon Thompson)

[From the Lyndon State College Twin Tower Topics]

To the director of YMCA Camp Ockanickon, Joe Bertolino—an accordion-playing member of his high school debate team in New Jersey—didn't seem so suited for counseling other geeks. Not at first.

''Do you hike?'' the director asked. ''No,'' Joe said. ''Swim?'' ''No.'' ''Boat?'' ''No.'' ''Arts and crafts?'' ''Maybe.''

The director wondered, ''Is there anything you do?'' ''I get along with people,'' Joe said. ''That's when my life began,'' Dr. Joseph Bertolino said this fall, a week after delivering Lyndon State College's State of the College Address, as the fifteenth president. ''To me, the meaning of life is relationships, and leadership is all about relationships.''

Joe, 49, officially succeeded Interim President Steve Gold on July 1; LSC offered Joe the position in February. For months, Joe traveled between Queens College, in New York City, where he was vice president for enrollment management and student affairs, and LSC, as part of his transition. Joe began his LSC tenure with a 100-day listening tour that involved the College and Northeast Kingdom communities. He has represented LSC twice in the nation's capital, and during his October 4 State of the College Address—preceded by a short, Chaplin-esque silent film about him—he rode into Academic & Student Activity Center, room 100 on his bike, donning a suit, and conveyed a clear message to 200 students, faculty, and staff.

''At Lyndon State College, students come first.'' Joe called the state of the college ''excellent.'' Enrollment is up, the budget is balanced—with a surplus—and LSC has five new faculty and 15 new staff members and administrators this year.

''Every student has said to me, without fail, 'Joe, I love it here,' '' he told his audience. Joe aims to bolster internal and external communications at LSC. His lengthy to-do list contains a new public relations campaign, with a focus on social media, and he wants to erase the off-campus community's perception of LSC as ''Harvard on the hill'' by continuing to build strong partnerships in the Northeast Kingdom.

He said LSC is a key stakeholder in Jay Peak Resort's plans to invest $500 million in the region over the next decade—a plan that could mean more internships for LSC students and jobs for graduates.

''Lyndon State College is the college of the Northeast Kingdom,'' Joe said. Joe has also started an electronic suggestion box—''Joe Wants to Know''—where anyone can post anonymous concerns and comments. During his one-hour speech, Joe posed challenges to alums: $1 million for an all-weather athletic field, and $1 million for a new version of the old Vail towers. ''The response from our alumni has been great,'' he said.

Joe also asked faculty and staff to increase their in-house contributions, and he imposed a lighthearted, non-mandatory policy called ''Go Green, Go Gold,'' where he asks the campus community to wear LSC colors each Wednesday. ''If you haven't figured it out by now,'' he said, after dismounting his bike, before his speech, ''I like to have fun. Life is too short, and the world is complicated enough.''

''I believe I am where I'm supposed to be, and I believe I'll be where I'm supposed to be,'' he said. ''It's been a long time since I've been in a place where I felt I haven't belonged.''

Days later, while in his office—''a beautiful corner of the world,'' he said—Joe called himself a motivated, goal oriented Type A personality that leads by surrounding himself with the talent to implement his vision. He is a foodie, a Lion King fan, and textbook introvert who usually recharges alone.

''As soon as I hit the front of a group, or a stage, I'm on,'' he said. ''I am representing and selling LSC. That's what I am doing. But I'm perfectly comfortable being by myself in the house at the end of a long day.''

Joe's social circle was small during 16 years of Catholic School in Glendora, N.J. His Italian father, also a Joe, worked for AT&T. His Irish mother, Eileen, was a nurse. He played accordion competitively for 10 years (and still plays a little). When Joe entered the University of Scranton, Pa., in 1982, ''There was a group for everyone,'' he said. ''In high school, there are popular groups. In college, there aren't popular groups. There are different groups.''

While earning his bachelor's degree in psychology/sociology in Scranton, Joe spent some time in seminary school and his summers at Camp Ockanickon, where he surprisingly became ''the go-to guy.'' He worked there for eight years, went on to become a board member and president, and will celebrate his 30-year relationship with Camp Ockanickon in the summer of 2013.

''Somehow, I became this listener, this counselor,'' he said of camp. ''It just happened.'' That inherent and well-honed skill helped Joe build an impressive, 10-page curriculum vitae filled with publications, workshops, consulting, honors, awards, and practically every facet of education, from teaching to administration. He earned his doctorate from Columbia University's Teachers College in 2003.

After eight years at Queens College, Joe left this year with responsibility for 22 departments and more than 200 employees. He also created veterans' services and a wellness center on campus. ''Joe stands out as a president who will attempt to engage, in an extremely supportive way, every single student we have,'' said Jonathan Davis, LSC Class of '97 and dean of students. ''I've already witnessed that in the form of students walking into his office to ask a question or simply to chat.''

Student recruitment and retention is also part of Joe's mission at LSC. He has charged Davis with co-chairing a team that would use data and strategies to increase the College's retention rates. Davis was an LSC student when Peggy Williams was president, in the 1990s. Williams was already one of Joe's mentors when he learned about the president's vacancy at LSC last December.

Joe was considering other job offers for higher salaries at larger schools, ''but I just kept coming back to Lyndon,'' he said. Enamored after his first trip to campus, and he went with no expectations, he called his partner, Bil, in New Jersey and said, ''The good news is I think I interviewed well, and I liked it. The bad news is I think I interviewed well, and I liked it.''

He elaborated further in his office more recently: ''Initially, I underestimated Lyndon in so many ways. Then, when I got here, it was nothing like I thought it would be. The people are passionate. The College is in great shape. I fell in love.'' Bil is in New Jersey for now, working at Rutgers University and living in the house he and Joe shared before Joe moved to Lyndonville. Joe converted the lower level of the LSC president's house—''our house,'' he calls it—to all-purpose meeting space. He lives upstairs.

''I believe I am where I'm supposed to be, and I believe I'll be where I'm supposed to be,'' he said. ''It's been a long time since I've been in a place where I felt I haven't belonged.''

TRIBUTE TO THE SOMERSET POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I stand here to pay tribute to the honorable men and women, past and present, of the Somerset Police Department in Pulaski County, KY, for 125 years of faithful service and tireless dedication.

Founded on March 13, 1888, the Somerset Police Department has admirably served the city and surrounding area and to this day represents the best of our State's citizens. One example of their thorough care for and involvement in the community is their annual charity basketball game. Typically, the officers challenge a local high-school team to an exhibition match—this year they took on the local fire department, with the proceeds from the event going to support a local girl who suffers from Type I diabetes. Their reputation for ''coming to the rescue'' was displayed in a different way than their daily work, but displayed nonetheless, and their efforts certainly are appreciated by those in need who benefit from the support raised by their charity.

I rise not only to celebrate those who serve, but also those we have lost in service. We are grateful for dedicated officers of the Somerset Police Department who risk their very lives to protect and bring order to their city.

At this time, I would like to applaud the Somerset Police Department on the 125th anniversary of its founding, and I request that an article recognizing this occasion from a Pulaski County, KY, newspaper be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Commonwealth Journal, March 16, 2013]

125 YEARS OF SERVICE: SOMERSET POLICE DEPARTMENT FOUNDED MARCH 13, 1888—STAFF REPORT, COMMONWEALTH JOURNAL

SOMERSET.—The Somerset Police Department recently celebrated 125 years of service in the community.

The history of SPD dates all the way back to March 13, 1888, when Mayor A. Wolf appointed John B. Ingram as the first chief of police for the newly formed City of Somerset.

The police department would grow along with the city's population and physical boundaries over the next 125 years.

Still, some have lost their lives in the line of duty.

''As the department gets a year older, it is important to remember those officers who lost their lives serving the citizens of our city,'' stated Lt. Shannon Smith, with SPD.

Somerset Chief of Police Silas West was shot and killed in 1928 while attempting to arrest a drunk person on the square. Patrolman Walter McKinley Massingale was shot and killed on Halloween night in 1929 while investigating a bootlegger on South Maple Street. And in 1957, Police Chief Harold Catron was shot on his porch on Jasper Street, and he would later die from those wounds in 1964.

''Our 125th anniversary is a milestone to our department,'' said SPD Acting Police Chief Major Doug Nelson. ''Through hard work, rigorous training, and an established level of professionalism, the men and women of the Somerset Police Department will continue to serve our community to make it a safe place to live and work.''

61ST NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator PRYOR and myself, I ask unanimous consent that the transcript of the 61th Annual National Prayer Breakfast be printed in the RECORD.

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

61ST NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2013, WASHINGTON, DC, CO-CHAIRS: SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS, SENATOR MARK PRYOR

Senator MARK PRYOR: Let me open by saying, ''Good morning fellow sinners.'' My name is MARK PRYOR, from Arkansas, and this is my brother, JEFF SESSIONS, from Alabama. Together, Jeff and I chair the weekly Senate breakfast group, which means we get to chair this ''slightly larger'' event this morning.

Senator JEFF SESSIONS: Thank you all for taking on the adventure of getting here this morning. We have a challenging experience planned for you this morning. We call this the Prayer Breakfast, not only because we come together to pray, but because so much prayer goes into this event, and hopefully, so much prayer comes out of it.

Senator PRYOR: Everything that happens over the next 90 minutes has really come about through prayer. As a matter of fact, one of the hundreds of volunteers that make this morning possible, literally came in very early this morning and prayed over each place setting here—prayed over each of you.

Senator SESSIONS: Prayer is not a spectator sport. We hope this experience enriches your own life of prayer, for the good of the nation, for the world and for your family.

Senator PRYOR: Let us join our hearts in prayer. God of the universe, who we individually worship in many different ways and languages, bring us together this morning in a shared experience of praise, understanding and commitment. Our world and our lives fall short of what you created them to be. Use this time to bless us, to bless our leaders, and especially our President, with a sense of who you are and how we all need to change. We are thankful for the food we are enjoying and friendships old and new. Be present in each of our hearts today, in your Holy, precious and matchless name, Amen.

Senator SESSIONS: Enjoy (what's left of) your breakfast.

Good morning. We've had a wonderful time together to discuss issues and have a joyful noise. We thank you for your attention.

Senator PRYOR: It's overwhelming to think of the pathways that each person took to get to this event today. Some from little villages halfway around the world and some from just 12 blocks away, so thank you all for coming.

Senator SESSIONS: This huge event, which has taken place for 61 years now, began with a group of people who happened to be leaders wanting to get together for breakfast and for prayer. One thing I know for sure is that life is complicated and is likely to get more complicated tomorrow than yesterday. But as members of the weekly Senate prayer breakfast group, we've learned that taking time each week to meet, to take off the disguises that we wear and pray and share our lives together, makes life better.

Senator PRYOR: In the modern world and especially in a city like this, there are thousands of things that drive us apart—politics, ideology and even religion. Today, though, we come together in the Spirit of Jesus who taught us to love one another, treat others as we want to be treated and to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. It would be a whole lot better world if we just listened to Him.

Senator SESSIONS: As you look around the room, understand that you're sharing this meal with people from more than 140 countries, all 50 states, heads of government, and leaders of all kinds. Through prayer, we believe God has brought us together for a reason. As you listen closely to the program, try to figure out what God is saying to you. And as you've heard, this event is hosted by members of the House and Senate and I would like to ask all the members of the House and Senate who are present, to stand at this time. We're also honored to be joined by two prime ministers, the Prime Minister of Serbia, His Excellency Ivica Dacic, and the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo, His Excellency Augustin Matata Ponyo. Thank you so much for being with us.

Senator PRYOR: I would like to introduce the head table that will lead us through this experience. I'll start on my right. Today you could say that you ate breakfast with the President and a gold medalist. At the end of our program, our closing prayer will be offered by Olympic champion, Gabrielle Douglas, whose new book is appropriately subtitled ''My Leap of Faith.'' Next to her is former U.S. Senator, Cabinet member and President of the Red Cross, Elizabeth Dole. Elizabeth, believe it or not, was our breakfast speaker 26 years ago. She will give a reading from the Holy Scriptures. Next to her is California Representative, JANICE HAHN, one of two co-chairs of the House prayer breakfast group, and next year she'll be standing in my place here. Then we have Admiral and Mrs. Jonathan Greenert. He is the U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, which puts him in charge of about 300,000 sailors, 300 ships and 3,500 aircraft. He will offer a prayer for our national leaders. Next, we have the spouse of my co-chair, Mary Sessions. And please join me in welcoming the passionate, principled and inspirational First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama.

Senator SESSIONS: Continuing down the table, we have our friend and former colleague, the good Vice President of the United States, JOE BIDEN. On the other side of our speaker is my colleague and friend, CHUCK SCHUMER. He's the pride of P.S. 197 in Brooklyn, New York and a dedicated member of Congress for amazingly 30 years, and a key member of the Democratic leadership. Chuck will be offering a reading from the Holy Scripture. Next to him is another good friend and former colleague of ours, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar. In his day job, Ken is responsible for more than 500 million acres of United States land. He is a former chair of this Senate prayer breakfast and will be offering a prayer for world leaders. Next to him is JANICE HAHN's sidekick for the next year, co-chair of the House breakfast group, LOUIE GOHMERT. He is a member of the House for 8 years and is from East Texas. And finally, visiting from Italy, Mr. Andrea Primicerio, and our soloist, Andrea Bocelli. Mr. Bocelli has gone from a small farming village near Pisa, Italy to selling more than 80 million records worldwide. I read that, at last count, in addition to song writing, he plays 9 instruments. This morning, he will play the most beautiful instrument God has created, the human voice. Join me in welcoming our soloist, Andrea Bocelli.

[Song.]

Senator CHARLES SCHUMER: Good morning. In the Jewish tradition, we are given not only an English name but a Hebrew name and my Hebrew name is Yesha'yahu—Isaiah. So I was particularly honored when Mark asked me to read from the Book of Isaiah. This is Isaiah 55:6–13,

''Seek the Lord, while He may be found, call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake their ways, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them turn to the Lord and he will have mercy on them; and to our God, for He will freely pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from the heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth, and making it bud and flourish so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth; it will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace. The mountains and hills will burst into song before you and all the trees of the fields will clap their hands. Instead of the thorn bush will grow the juniper and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the Lord's renowned for an everlasting sign that will endure forever.''

Representative LOUIE GOHMERT: It is such a pleasure to be here and it's such a pleasure to share our Thursday morning prayer breakfast with you. My co-chair in the House is JANICE HAHN. It's a surprise for some people, after they see the way we go back and forth and debate, to see that the Prayer Breakfast is truly bipartisan. We work together. We pray together. And there's something that really brings people together when you pray together. It's the belief in the power of prayer that brings us together.

My wife and I have tried to teach that to our three girls. When they were old enough to pray, Cathy and I and our three girls would gather around one of the girls' beds and we would pray each night. One night we had some nose spray that a doctor prescribed for our middle daughter, Caroline—she'd been having real serious sinus problems. She didn't want it up her nose—but I was bigger than her. It was going to be good for her according to the doctor, so we got it up the nose. But there was a lot of crying, wailing and gnashing of teeth. But once the nose spray had been administered and the tears subsided, the crying stopped, we gathered for prayers. Katie prayed first and then Caroline and Caroline finished her prayer by saying ''And please God, help Sarah (the little one), mind her own business and quit being such a pest. And help her to just leave me and Katie alone.'' Little Sarah had the last prayer, and in her little angelic voice she said, ''Please God, help Daddy stick some more medicine up Caroline's nose.'' We had taught them how to pray but not necessarily what it was for.

So on Thursday mornings we gather, not to pray that God will help us to stick something up our opponent's nose, but we pray; and God grants mending and healing and blessing and leadership, and it's a beautiful thing to see those come together. It does make us better. It makes us stronger. And it makes the government work better. Which is why Benjamin Franklin, in his own words—his own handwriting—said, ''In the beginning contest with Great Britain when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room. Our prayers are heard and they were graciously answered.'' Janice and I and our other colleagues have seen those prayers answered and it's what brings us together. Thanks for joining with us today.

Representative JANICE HAHN: Good morning. Mr. President, Madam First Lady, Mr. Vice President, Senators, distinguished guests; I'm so delighted to be here this morning with all of you. It's such an honor to co-chair the House Congressional prayer breakfast with my friend and colleague, Congressman LOUIE GOHMERT. His colleagues have said, ''This is the only chairmanship that Speaker BOEHNER can't remove him from for bad behavior.'' Only God can do that.

Today's Prayer Breakfast offers an opportunity for us to set aside political labels and come together to be inspired and pray for the critical issues that are facing our nation and the world. I was elected to Congress in the middle of one of the most bitter, rancorous

and divided periods in our nation's history. But in the midst of that discord, there was one place that I found that we could set aside our partisan bickering and our differences and come together—a place where once a week, we could be there for each other with our God. That place was the weekly Congressional prayer breakfast. I've found some unlikely friends in that breakfast. But they have helped me to be a better member of Congress and to better serve my God and my constituents.

Faith has always been a strong part of my life and my story. I grew up in the church. My grandparents on my mother's side were missionaries to Japan. And my grandmother on my father's side, in a moment of deep despair and helplessness, turned to God for help in raising her seven little boys under the age of 10 when her husband died suddenly. That decision that my grandmother Hattie made, helped me find my journey of faith. Every week when a member of Congress comes to our prayer breakfast and tells their own journey of faith, it gives us a bond that can't be broken. We believe in the power of prayer and every week, we give thanks when God has answered our prayers. Abraham Lincoln said, ''I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I have nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for the day.'' May we all continue to believe that our own wisdom is insufficient. God bless you all.

Admiral Jonathan Greenert: Good Morning. Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, Mr. Vice President, Senators, Congressmen, distinguished guests. Many times many of you have said, even today, to those of us that wear the cloth of the nation,'' thank you for your service.'' And on behalf of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coastguardsmen, may I say thank you for your service and your support to your armed forces. Please join me in a prayer for our national leaders.

Oh Lord, we come before you today, thankful for the many blessings you have bestowed upon our nation. And we humbly ask for your continued guidance and strength. On this day, we are reminded to give thanks for the extraordinary freedoms that we enjoy, made possible by the efforts of past generations of men and women who have served this great nation. Your word tells us of King David whose willingness to place his faith in you during difficult times serves as an example for us all. Like David, there are many in this nation who have answered the call to serve, both in and out of uniform. Lord, we are thankful for their dedication, their passion, their perseverance and for the families that support their every effort. When it comes to our search for inspiration, Scripture clearly speaks about where we should begin charting our course—we begin with prayer. We ask that you continue to guide our leaders with wisdom and understanding as they weather the storms that confront our nation. Provide them, God, with the vision necessary to see the way ahead. The strength required to act on difficult decisions and the compassion to care for the wellbeing of those that they lead. Fortify the resolve of the men and women who lead our great nation and provide us with bold, confident and accountable leaders capable of carrying out those actions that your wisdom directs. In your Holy Name we pray, amen.

The Honorable Elizabeth Dole: Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, Mr. Vice President, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen. It's my privilege today to read selected portions of Hebrews 11, which has been called the Hall of Faith. And I'll end with Hebrews 12 versus 1–3 and verse 14.

''Now, faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. And without faith, it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. By faith, Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By faith, Abraham, even though he was past age and Sarah herself was barren was unable to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. By faith, Abraham when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son even though God had said to him ''it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.'' Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death. By faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future. By faith, Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff. By faith, Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. By faith, Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born because they saw he was no ordinary child and they were not afraid of the king's edict. By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. By faith, he left Egypt not fearing the king's anger. He persevered because he saw him who is invisible. By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land. By faith, the walls of Jericho fell after the people had marched around them for seven days. By faith, the prostitute Rehab because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barack, Sampson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets who through faith, conquered kingdoms, administered justice and gained what was promised. Who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames and escaped the edge of the sword, whose weakness was turned to strength. Others were tortured and refused to be released so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced years of flogging while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned, they were sawed in two, they were put to death by the sword. These were all commended for their faith. Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance, the race that is set before us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfector of our faith, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, scorning its shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him, who endured such opposition from sinful men so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy, for without holiness no one will see the Lord.''

The Honorable Ken Salazar: Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, Vice President BIDEN, members of the United States Senate, fellow Cabinet members, members of the House of Representatives and distinguished guests. The following prayer was written by Cesar Chavez, the great leader of the United States Farm Workers of America. Last year, President Obama visited the gravesite of Cesar Chavez and his office at a place in La Paz, California; and there, he made this place a national monument so that we can honor the work of a true hero and a follower of Christ and a follower of Gandhi. It was a moving time for the President and all of us who were there that day.

Chavez was a servant leader who followed the teachings of Jesus Christ. He followed the teachings of Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King. He was ever prayerful to Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe (Our Lady of Guadalupe). Today as the world, in many different places, rages in a debate about the peopling of our nations and immigration, and as our nation does the same thing, let us pray that all of our world leaders and all of our leaders here in the United States, will be inspired by the true story of the peopling of our nations and give voice to those who now live in the fear of the shadows of our society. And so, inspired by the teachings and life of Saint Francis and Jesus Christ, let us pray as Cesar Chavez prayed, as he fasted for those who have no voice, who are the most vulnerable in our society.

He prayed: ''Show me the suffering of the most miserable, so that I will know my people's plight. Free me to pray for others, because you are present in every person. Help me to take responsibility for my own life, so that I can be free at last. Grant me the courage to serve others, for in service there is true life. Give me honesty and patience, so that I can work with others. Bring forth song and celebration, so that the Spirit will be alive among us. Let the Spirit flourish and grow, so that we will never tire of the struggle. Let us remember those who have died for justice, for they have given us life. Help us love even those who hate us, so we can change the world.'' God bless you, God bless the United States of America, God bless all of our leaders.

Senator SESSIONS: Of all of the complex things in the world, perhaps the most complex is the human brain. How come I can remember the words of the preamble of the Constitution but can't find my glasses? We've invited as our guest speaker this morning a gentleman for three reasons: he loves Jesus, he has a compelling life story and he is a distinguished man of science and healing. We hope that he can help us sort some things out. May I introduce, the director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at one of the world's great hospitals, Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, Dr. Benjamin Carson, Sr.

Dr. Benjamin S. Carson, Sr.: Thank you so much. Mr. President, Mr. Vice President, Mrs. Obama, distinguished guests—which includes everybody. Thank you so much for this wonderful honor to be at this stage again. I was here 16 years ago and the fact that they've invited me back means that I didn't offend too many people—so that was great. I want to start by reading four texts, which will put into context what I'm going to say.

Proverbs 11:9. ''With his mouth, the godless destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous escape.''

Proverbs 11:12, ''A man who lacks judgment derides his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his tongue.''

Proverbs 11:25, ''A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.''

2nd Chronicles 7:14, ''If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and heal their land.''

I have an opportunity to speak in a lot of venues—this is my fourth speech this week—and to talk to a lot of people. And I've been asking people—what concerns you? What are you most concerned about in the terms of the spirituality and the direction of our nation and our world? I've talked to very prominent Democrats, and very prominent Republicans and I was surprised by the uniformity of their answers. And those have informed my comments this morning.

It's not my intention to offend anyone. I have discovered, however, in recent years that it's very difficult to speak to a large group of people these days and not offend someone. And I know people walk around with their feelings on their shoulders waiting for you to say something—''Ah, did you hear that?'' And they can't hear anything else you say. The PC police are out in force at all times. I remember once I was talking to a group about the difference between a human brain and a dog's brain. And a man got offended—he said, ''You can't talk about dogs like that.'' But people just focus in on that and completely miss the point of what you're saying. We've reached the point where people are afraid to actually talk about what they want to say—because somebody might be offended. People are afraid to say, ''Merry Christmas'' at Christmastime. It doesn't matter whether the person you're talking to is Jewish or whether they're any religion—that's a salutation of greeting, of good will. We've got to get over this sensitivity. It keeps people from saying what they really believe.

I'm reminded of a very successful young businessman who loved to buy his mother these exotic gifts for Mother's Day. And he ran out of ideas, and then he ran across these birds. These birds were cool. They cost 5,000 dollars apiece—they could dance, they could sing, they could talk. He was so excited, he bought two of them; sent them to his mother; couldn't' wait to call her up on Mother's Day, ''Mother, mother, what did you think of those birds?'' And she said, ''They was good.'' He said, ''No, no, no, mother, you didn't eat those birds; those birds cost 5,000 dollars apiece—they could dance, they could sing, they could talk.'' And she said, ''Well, they should have said something.'' And that's where we end up too if we don't speak up for what we believe. What we need to do in this PC world is forget about unanimity of speech and unanimity of thought and we need to concentrate on being respectful to those people with whom we disagree—that's when I think we begin to make real progress.

One last thing about political correctness—which I think is a horrible thing, by the way. I'm very, very compassionate and I'm not ever out to offend anyone, but PC is dangerous because in this country, one of the founding principles was freedom of thought and freedom of expression and it muffles people, it puts a muzzle on them. And at the same time, keeps people from discussing important issues while the fabric of their society is being changed. And we cannot fall for that trick. What we need to do is start talking about things, talking about things that are important, things that were important in the development of our nation. One of those things was education. I'm very passionate about education because it made such a big difference in my life. But here we are at a time in the world, the information age, the age of technology, and yet 30 per cent of people who enter high school in this country do not graduate. 44 percent of the people who start a four year college program do not finish it in four years. What is that about?

Think back to a darker time in our history. 200 years ago when slavery was going on, it was illegal to educate a slave, particularly to teach him to read. Why do you think that was? Because when you educate a man, you liberate the man. And there I was as a youngster placing myself in the same situation that a horrible institution did because I wasn't taking advantage of the education, because I was a horrible student. Most of my classmates thought I was the stupidest person in the world. They called me ''dummy.'' I was the butt of all the jokes. Admittedly, it was a bad environment—a single parent home—my mother and father had gotten divorced early on. My mother got married when she was 13. She was one of 24 children; had a horrible life, discovered that her husband was a bigamist, had another family, and she only had a third grade education. She had to take care of us, in dire poverty. I had a horrible temper, poor self-esteem; all of the things that you think would preclude success. But I had something very important. I had a mother who believed in me. And I had a mother who would never allow herself to be a victim, no matter what happened. She never made excuses and she never accepted an excuse from us. And if we ever came up with an excuse, she always said, ''Do you have a brain?'' And if the answer was ''Yes,'' then she said, ''Then you could of thought your way out of it; it doesn't matter what John or Susan or Mary or anybody else did or said.'' And it was the most important thing she did for my brother and myself because if you don't accept excuses, pretty soon people stop giving them and they start looking for solutions and that is a critical issue when it comes to success.

We did live in dire poverty and one of the things that I hated was poverty. Some people hate spiders, some people hate snakes—I hated poverty. I couldn't stand it. But my mother couldn't stand the fact that we were doing poorly in school. She prayed, she asked God to give her wisdom, what could she do to get her young sons to understand the importance of developing their minds, so that they could control their own lives? And you know what? God gave her the wisdom, at least in her opinion. My brother and I didn't think it was that wise because it was to turn off the TV. She let us only watch two or three TV programs during the week. And with all that spare time, read two books apiece from the Detroit public libraries and submit to her written book reports, which she couldn't read but we didn't know that—she'd put checkmarks and highlights and stuff. But you know, I just hated this, and my friends were out having a good time. Her friends would criticize her, they would say, ''You can't make boys stay in the house reading books, they'll grow up, they'll hate you.'' I would overhear them and I would say, ''You know, mother, they're right.'' But she didn't care. But after a while, I actually began to enjoy reading those books. Even though we were very poor, between the covers of those books, I could go anywhere, I could be anybody, I could do anything. I began to read about people of great accomplishment. And as I read those stories, I began to see a connecting thread. I began to see that the person that has the most to do with you and what happens to you in life is you. You make decisions. You decide how much energy you want to put behind that decision. And I came to understand that I had control of my own destiny. At that point, I didn't hate poverty anymore because I knew it was only temporary. I knew I could change that. It was incredibly liberating for me, it made all the difference.

And to continue on that theme of education, in 1831, Alexis de Tocqueville came to America to study this country. The Europeans were fascinated—how could a fledgling nation barely 50 years old already be competing with them on virtually every level. This is impossible—de Tocqueville was going to sort it out. And he looked at our government and he was duly impressed by the three branches of government—four now because now of special interest groups, but it was only three back in those days. And he said, ''Wow, this is really something.'' And then he said, ''Let me look at their educational system,'' and he was blown away. Anybody finishing second grade was completely literate. He could find a mountain man on the outskirts of society—the man could read a newspaper, could have a political discussion, could tell him how the government worked.

If you really want to be impressed, take a look at the chapter on education in my latest book, ''America the Beautiful,'' which I wrote with my wife; it came out last year. And in that education chapter, you will see questions extracted from a sixth grade Exit Exam from the 1800's—a test you had to pass to get your sixth grade certificate. I doubt most college graduates today could pass that test. We have dumbed things down to that level. And the reason that that is so dangerous is because the people who founded this nation said that our system of government was designed for a well informed and educated populous. And when they become less informed, they become vulnerable. Think about that, our system of government, and that's why the education is so vitally important.

Now some people say ''Ah, you're overblowing it, things aren't that bad, and you're a doctor, a neurosurgeon, why are you concerned about these things?'' I've got news for you. Five doctors signed the Declaration of Independence. Doctors were involved in the framing of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and a whole bunch of things. It's only been in recent decades that we've extracted ourselves—which I think is a big mistake. We need doctors and we need scientists, engineers, we need all of those people involved in government, not just lawyers. I don't have anything against lawyers, but here's the thing about lawyers—and I'm sorry but I got to be truthful—what do lawyers learn in law school? To win, by hook or by crook, you got to win. So you've got all these Democrat lawyers and you've got all these Republican lawyers and their side wants to win. We need to get rid of that. What we need to start thinking about is: how do we solve problems?

Now, before I get shot, let me finish here. I don't like to bring up problems without coming up with solutions. My wife and I started the Carson Scholars Fund 16 years ago after we heard about an international survey looking at the ability of eighth graders in 22 countries to solve math and science problems; and we came out number 21 out of 22, barely beat out number 22, very concerning. And we'd go into schools and we'd see all these trophies, All State basketball, All State wrestling, All State this, that and the other. The quarterback was the big man on campus, What about the intellectual superstar? What did they get? A National Honor Society pin, a pat on the head, ''there, there little nerd''—nobody cared about them. And is it any wonder that sometimes the smart kids try to hide; they don't want anybody to know that they're smart? This is not helping us as a nation. So we started giving out scholarships to students from all backgrounds for superior academic performance and demonstration of humanitarian qualities. Unless you cared about other people, it didn't matter how smart you were. We've got plenty of people like that, we don't need those. We need smart people who care about other people. We will give them money, the money would go into a trust, they would get interest on it and then when they went to college, they get the money. But also, the school gets a trophy, every bit as impressive as the sports trophies. It goes right out there with the others. They get a medal. They get to go to a banquet. And we try to put them on the same kind of pedestal as we do the All State athletes.

Now, I have nothing against athletics or entertainment, please believe me. I'm from Baltimore, the Ravens won, this is great, okay. But what will maintain our position in the world, the ability to shoot a 25 foot jump

shot or the ability to solve a quadratic equation? We need to put things into proper perspective. Many teachers have told us that when we put a Carson Scholar in their class room, the GPA of the whole class goes up over the next year. And it's been very gratifying. We started 16 years ago with 25 scholarships in Maryland; now we've given out more than 5,000 and we're in all 50 states. But we also put in reading rooms. These are fascinating places that no little kid could possibly pass up. They get points for the amount of time they spend in their reading, the number of books that they read, and they can trade them in for prizes. In the beginning, they do it for the prizes, but it doesn't take long before their academic performance begins to improve. We particularly target Title 1 schools where kids come from homes with no books and they go to schools with no libraries. Those are the ones who drop out and we need to truncate that process early on because we can't afford to waste any of those young people. For every one of those people that we keep from going down that path, that path of self-destruction and mediocrity, that's one less person you have to protect yourself and your family from. One less person you have to pay for in the penal or the welfare system. One more tax paying productive member of society who may invent a new energy source or come up with a cure for cancer. They're all important to us and we need every single one of them, it makes a difference. When you go home tonight, please read about it, Carson Scholar Fund, Carsonscholars.org.

But, why is it so important that we educate our people? Because we don't want to go down the same pathway as many other pinnacle nations have who have preceded us. I think particularly about ancient Rome—very powerful, nobody could even challenge them militarily. But what happened to them? They destroyed themselves from within—moral decay, fiscal irresponsibility—they destroyed themselves. And if you don't think that can happen to America, you get out your books and you start reading. But you know we can fix it. Why can we fix it? Because we're smart; we have some of the most intellectually gifted people leading our nation. All we need to do is remember what our real responsibilities are so we can solve the problems. I think about these problems all the time and my role model was Jesus and he used parables to help people understand things.

One of our big problems right now—and like I said, I'm not politically correct so, I'm sorry—our deficit is a big problem. Think about it. Our national debt, 16½ trillion dollars, you think that's not a lot of money. I tell you what, count one number per second, which you can't even do because when you get to a thousand, you can't, it'll take you longer than a second, but one number per second. You know how long that'll take you to count to 16 trillion? 507,000 years—more than a half a million years to get there. We have to deal with this. Here's the parable. A family falls on hard times—dad loses his job or is demoted, gets part time work, has five children. He comes to the five children and he says ''We're going to have to reduce your allowance.'' Well, they're not happy about it; but he says, ''Except for John and Susan, they're special. They can keep their allowance; in fact, I may give them more.'' How do you think that's going to go down? Not too well. Same thing happens, enough said.

What about our taxation system? So complex there is no one who can possibly comply with every jot and tittle of our tax system. If I wanted to get you, I could get you on a tax issue. That doesn't make any sense. What we need to do is come up with something that is simple. When I pick up my Bible, you know what I see? I see the fairest individual in the universe, God. And he's given us a system, it's called, tithe. Now, we don't necessarily have to do it 10 per cent, but it's the principle. He didn't say, ''If your crops fail, don't give me any tithes.'' He didn't say, ''If you have a bumper crop, give me triple tithes.'' So there must be something inherently fair about proportionality. You make 10 billion dollars, you put in a billion. You make 10 dollars, you put in one. Of course, you've got to get rid of the loopholes. But now some people say, ''Well that's not fair because it doesn't hurt the guy who made 10 billion dollars as much as the guy who made 10.'' Where does it say you have to hurt the guy? He just put a billion dollars in the pot; you know we don't need to hurt him. It's that kind of thinking that has resulted in 602 banks in the Cayman Islands. That money needs to be back here building our infrastructure and creating jobs. And we're smart enough to figure out how to do that.

We've already started down the path of solving one of the other big problems, health care. We need to have good health care for everybody. It's the most important thing that a person can have. Money means nothing, titles means nothing, when you don't have your health. But, we've got to figure out efficient ways to do it. We spend a lot of money on health care, twice as much per capita as anybody else in the world and yet we're not very efficient. What can we do? Here's my solution. When a person is born, give them a birth certificate, an electronic medical record and a health saving's account to which money can be contributed pre-tax from the time you're born to the time you die. When you die, you can pass it on to your family members so that when you're 85 years old and you've got six diseases, you're not trying to spend up everything, you're happy to pass it on and there's nobody talking about death panels. That's number one. And also, for the people who are indigent, who don't have any money; we can make contributions to their HSA each month because we already have this huge pot of money. Instead of sending it to some bureaucracy, let's put it in their HSA's. Now they have some control over their own health care. And what do you think they're going to do? They're going to learn very quickly how to be responsible. When Mr. JONES gets that diabetic foot ulcer, he's not going to the emergency room and blowing a big chunk of it. He's going to go to the clinic. He learns that very quickly. He gets the same treatment in the emergency room they send him out to the clinic and say ''Now let's get your diabetes under control so you're not back here in three weeks with another problem. That's how we begin to solve these kinds of problems. It's much more complex than that and I don't have time to go into it all but we can do all of these things because we're smart people.

And let me just begin to close here by another parable. A sea captain is out on the sea, near to the area where the Titanic went down. He looks ahead and there's a bright light right there, another ship he figures. He tells his signaler; signal that ship, ''Deviate 10 degrees to the south.'' Back comes the message ''No, you deviate 10 degrees to the north.'' Well he's a little bit incensed, he says, ''Send a message, This is Captain Johnson, deviate 10 degrees to the north'.'' Back comes the message, ''This is Ensign 4th Class Riley, deviate 10 degrees to the south.'' Now he's really upset. He says, ''Send them a message, this is a naval destroyer.'' Back comes the message, ''This is a light house.'' Enough said.

What about the symbol of our nation, the eagle, the bald eagle. It's an interesting story how we chose that but a lot of people think we call it the bald eagle because it looks like it has a bald head. That's not the reason. It comes from the Old English word, piebald, which means crowned with white; and we just shortened it to bald. Now use that the next time you see somebody who thinks they know everything—you get them with that one. But, why is that eagle able to fly high, to fly forward? Because it has two wings, a left wing and a right wing. Enough said.

And I want to close with this story. 200 years ago this nation was involved in a war, the War of 1812. The British, who are now our good friends, thought that we were young whippersnappers; it was time for us to become a colony again. They were winning that war, marching up the Eastern Seaboard, destroying city after city, destroyed Washington D.C., burned down the White House; next stop, Baltimore. As they came into the Chesapeake Bay, that armada of ships—war ships as far as the eye could see—it was looking grim; Fort McHenry standing right there. General Armistead, who was in charge of Fort McHenry, had a large American flag commissioned to fly in front of the fort. The admiral in charge of the British fleet was offended and said, ''Take that flag down. You have until dusk to take that flag down. If you don't take it down, we will reduce you to ashes.'' There was a young amateur poet on board by the name of Francis Scott Key, sent by President Madison to try to obtain the release of an American physician who was being held captive. He overheard the British plans; they were not going to let him off the ship. He mourned as dusk approached. He mourned for his fledgling young nation. And as the sun fell, the bombardment started, bombs bursting in air, missiles, so much debris. He strained trying to see—was the flag still there? Couldn't see a thing. All night long it continued. At the crack of dawn he ran out to the banister, he looked, straining his eyes, but all he could see was dust and debris. And then there was a clearing and he beheld the most beautiful sight he'd ever seen—the torn and tattered stars and stripes still waving. And many historians say that was the turning point in the War of 1812. We went on to win that war and to retain our freedom. And if you had gone onto the grounds of Fort McHenry that day, you would have seen at the base of that flag the bodies of soldiers who took turns propping up that flag. They would not let that flag go down because they believed in what that flag symbolized. And what did it symbolize? One nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all. Thank you, God bless.

Senator PRYOR: Thank you Dr. Carson. It is now my great honor to introduce our President. One of the striking measures of the passage of time since you first were with us Mr. President is the comparison photographs of your daughters at your first Inauguration and you're second. You have a beautiful and wonderful family. And they remind us of the core American values of faith, family and optimism in the future. Mr. President, we want to express our love and our respect for you this morning. You carry burdens none of us in this room can imagine. Thank you for keeping the unbroken commitment of ten former presidents to join us for breakfast and prayer. Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States, Barack Obama.

President Barack Obama: Thank you very much. Please have a seat. Mark, thank you for that introduction. I thought he was going to talk about my gray hair. It is true that my daughters are gorgeous. That's because my wife is gorgeous. And my goal is to improve my gene pool. To Mark and Jeff, thank you for your wonderful work on behalf of

this breakfast. To all of those who worked so hard to put this together; to the heads of state, members of Congress, and my Cabinet, religious leaders and distinguished guests. To our outstanding speaker. To all the faithful who've journeyed to our capital, Michelle and I are truly honored to be with you this morning.

Before I begin, I hope people don't mind me taking a moment of personal privilege. I want to say a quick word about a close friend of mine and yours, Joshua Dubois. Now, some of you may not know Joshua, but Joshua has been at my side—in work and in prayer—for years now. He is a young reverend, but wise in years. He's worked on my staff. He's done an outstanding job as the head of our Faith-Based office. Every morning he sends me via email a daily meditation—a snippet of Scripture for me to reflect on. And it has meant the world to me. And despite my pleas, tomorrow will be his last day in the White House. So this morning I want to publically thank Joshua for all that he's done, and I know that everybody joins me in wishing him all the best in his future endeavors—including getting married.

It says something about us—as a nation and as a people—that every year, for 61 years now, this great prayerful tradition has endured. It says something about us that every year, in times of triumph and in tragedy, in calm and in crisis, we come together, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as brothers and sisters, and as children of God. Every year, in the midst of all our busy and noisy lives, we set aside one morning to gather as one community, united in prayer. We do so because we're a nation ever humbled by our history, and we're ever attentive to our imperfections—particularly the imperfections of our President. We come together because we're a people of faith. We know that faith is something that must be cultivated. Faith is not a possession. Faith is a process.

I was struck by the passage that was read earlier from the Book of Hebrews: ''Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and He rewards those who diligently seek Him.'' He rewards those who diligently seek Him—not just for one moment, or one day, but for every moment, and every day. As Christians, we place our faith in the nail-scarred hands of Jesus Christ. But so many other Americans also know the close embrace of faith—Muslims and Jews, Hindus and Sikhs. And all Americans—whether religious or secular—have a deep and abiding faith in this nation.

Recently I had occasion to reflect on the power of faith. A few weeks ago, during the inauguration, I was blessed to place my hand on the Bibles of two great Americans, two men whose faith still echoes today. One was the Bible owned by President Abraham Lincoln, and the other, the Bible owned by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As I prepared to take the sacred oath, I thought about these two men, and I thought of how, in times of joy and pain and uncertainty, they turned to their Bibles to seek the wisdom of God's word—and thought of how, for as long as we've been a nation, so many of our leaders, our Presidents, and our preachers, our legislators and our jurists have done the same. Each one faced their own challenges; each one finding in Scripture their own lessons from the Lord. And as I was looking out on the crowd during the inauguration I thought of Dr. King. We often think of him standing tall in front of the endless crowds, stirring the nation's conscience with a bellowing voice and a mighty dream. But I also thought of his doubts and his fears, for those moments came as well—the lonely moments when he was left to confront the presence of long-festering injustice and undisguised hate; imagined the darkness and the doubt that must have surrounded him when he was in that Birmingham jail, and the anger that surely rose up in him the night his house was bombed with his wife and child inside, and the grief that shook him as he eulogized those four precious girls taken from this Earth as they gathered in a house of God. And I was reminded that, yes, Dr. King was a man of audacious hope and a man of relentless optimism. But he was also a man occasionally brought to his knees in fear and in doubt and in helplessness. And in those moments, we know that he retreated alone to a quiet space so he could reflect and he could pray and he could grow his faith. And I imagine he turned to certain verses that we now read. I imagine him reflecting on Isaiah, that we wait upon the Lord; that the Lord shall renew those who wait; that they shall mount up with wings as eagles, and they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint. We know that in Scripture, Dr. King found strength; in the Bible, he found conviction. In the words of God, he found a truth about the dignity of man that, once realized, he never relinquished.

We know Lincoln had such moments as well. To see this country torn apart, to see his fellow citizens waging a ferocious war that pitted brother against brother, family against family—that was as heavy a burden as any President will ever have to bear. We know Lincoln constantly met with troops and visited the wounded and honored the dead. And the toll mounted day after day, week after week. And you can see in the lines of his face the toll that the war cost him. But he did not break. Even as he buried a beloved son, he did not break. Even as he struggled to overcome melancholy, despair, grief, he did not break. And we know that he surely found solace in Scripture; that he could acknowledge his own doubts, that he was humbled in the face of the Lord. And that, I think, allowed him to become a better leader. It's what allowed him in what may be one of the greatest speeches ever written, in his second Inaugural, to describe the Union and the Confederate soldier alike—both reading the same Bible, both prayed to the same God, but ''the prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes.'' In Lincoln's eyes, the power of faith was humbling, allowing us to embrace our limits in knowing God's will. And as a consequence, he was able to see God in those who vehemently opposed him.

Today, the divisions in this country are, thankfully, not as deep or destructive as when Lincoln led, but they are real. The differences in how we hope to move our nation forward are less pronounced than when King marched, but they do exist. And as we debate what is right and what is just, what is the surest way to create a more hopeful—for our children—how we're going to reduce our deficit, what kind of tax plans we're going to have, how we're going to make sure that every child is getting a great education—and, Doctor, it is very encouraging to me that you turned out so well by your mom not letting you watch TV. I'm going to tell my daughters that when they complain. In the midst of all these debates, we must keep that same humility that Dr. King and Lincoln and Washington and all our great leaders understood is at the core of true leadership. In a democracy as big and as diverse as ours, we will encounter every opinion. And our task as citizens—whether we are leaders in government or business or spreading the word—is to spend our days with open hearts and open minds; to seek out the truth that exists in an opposing view and to find the common ground that allows for us as a nation, as a people, to take real and meaningful action. And we have to do that humbly, for no one can know the full and encompassing mind of God. And we have to do it every day, not just at a prayer breakfast. I have to say this is now our fifth prayer breakfast and it is always just a wonderful event. But I do worry sometimes that as soon as we leave the prayer breakfast, everything we've been talking about the whole time at the prayer breakfast seems to be forgotten—on the same day of the prayer breakfast. I mean, you'd like to think that the shelf life wasn't so short. But I go back to the Oval Office and I start watching the cable news networks and it's like we didn't pray.

And so my hope is that that humility carries over every day, every moment. While God may reveal His plan to us in portions, the expanse of His plan is for God, and God alone, to understand. ''For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.'' Until that moment, until we know, and are fully known, all we can do is live our lives in a Godly way and assume that those we deal with every day, including those in an opposing party, they're groping their way, doing their best, going through the same struggles we're going through. And in that pursuit, we are blessed with guidance. God has told us how He wishes for us to spend our days. His Commandments are there to be followed. Jesus is there to guide us; the Holy Spirit, to help us. Love the Lord God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. Love your neighbor as yourself. See in everyone, even in those with whom you disagree most vehemently, the face of God. For we are all His children. That's what I thought of as I took the oath of office a few weeks ago and touched those Bibles—the comfort that Scripture gave Lincoln and King and so many leaders throughout our history; the verses they cherished, and how those words of God are there for us as well, waiting to be read any day that we choose. I thought about how their faith gave them the strength to meet the challenges of their time, just as our faith can give us the strength to meet the challenges of ours. And most of all, I thought about their humility, and how we don't seem to live that out the way we should, every day, even when we give lip service to it.

As President, sometimes I have to search for the words to console the inconsolable. Sometimes I search Scripture to determine how best to balance life as a President and as a husband and as a father. I often search for Scripture to figure out how I can be a better man as well as a better President. And I believe that we are united in these struggles. But I also believe that we are united in the knowledge of a redeeming Savior, whose grace is sufficient for the multitude of our sins, and whose love is never failing. And most of all, I know that all Americans—men and women of different faiths and, yes, those of no faith that they can name—are, nevertheless, joined together in common purpose, believing in something that is bigger than ourselves, and the ideals that lie at the heart of our nation's founding—that as a people we are bound together.

And so this morning, let us summon the common resolve that comes from our faith. Let us pray to God that we may be worthy of the many blessings He has bestowed upon our nation. Let us retain that humility not just during this hour but for every hour. And let me suggest that those of us with the most power and influence need to be the most humble. And let us promise Him and to each other, every day as the sun rises over America that it will rise over a people who are striving to make this a more perfect union. Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

Senator SESSIONS: Thank you. Thank you Mr. President. We're not of the same political party, sometimes we disagree, but speaking as an American, we are one nation and we have one President who serves us all. Thank you for being my President, thank you for being our President.

So let's all enjoy now a final selection from Andrea Boccelli.

[Song]

Mr. Andrea Bocelli: Thank you very much. I'm very ashamed of my English because I would like to tell you many, many things but I can't because my English is very poor. But I live this moment like a dream, because very often my country has been in trouble, just because the left and the right never are able to speak with each other. And in this country where I received a lot, a big, big affection, incredible affection, today I received also a big teaching. I will try going back to my country, Italy, to transmit this will that for me is the most important thing—the will to pray together. Thank you very much.

Senator PRYOR: Thank you Andrea. Just like your songs that was very beautiful. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, ''Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.'' Let's be wise people in the important roles that we're about to step back into in a few minutes and put what we've heard and learned here into practice.

Senator SESSIONS: Love God. Love your neighbor. Let's make that simple rule our guide and make our complex world a better one today. And to offer our closing prayer, please welcome Olympic gold medalist, Gabrielle Douglas.

Ms. Gabrielle Douglas: Thank you. It's such an honor to be here today with so many distinguished leaders, especially Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, Mr. Vice President and the Honorable MARK PRYOR and the Honorable JEFF SESSIONS. Now please, please join me as we bow our heads and pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the many continued blessings. We uplift every leader from every nation and ask that you continue to give them wisdom as they govern. Teach us to walk in humility, strengthen us as we strive to fulfill your plan, your purpose for our lives. And as we go from here, I pray we would all pursue your peace, your love and your grace, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Senator PRYOR: We're done, thank you, God bless you.

EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR A FEW

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article written by Ken Hamilton, Executive Vice President of the Wyoming Farm Bureau that was Published in the April 2013 edition of Wyoming Agriculture. The article's title is ''Equal Access to Justice for a few.''

Mr. President, while we continue to fight for increased transparency with regards to the Equal Access to Justice Act, one thing is already clear—the Federal Government is picking winners and losers. Mr. Hamilton calls this a ''cozy appearance between the groups who sue the Federal Government and the desire by the government to help pay their way.'' He points out in one recent case of several environmental groups suing the Fish and Wildlife Service over wolf delisting efforts where the Federal Government quickly approved their November 2012 claim for $380,000 in attorney fees. That is $380,000 dollars of hard-earned American taxpayer dollars this administration's Justice Department was more than happy to hand over to their political allies.

Ken continues to illustrate the apparent political fingerprints and favoritism in the Justice Department by stating, ''Meanwhile back at the ranch, the Wyoming Wolf Coalition through its attorney Harriet Hageman, has asked the Federal Government for their fees under EAJA. These fees, one-tenth of the environmental claim, have been argued over by the same Federal Government since April of 2011.'' Let me repeat that. Since 2011, the Justice Department has been actively arguing over an EAJA claim of approximately $36,000 to a group that supported wolf delisting when the same Justice Department agreed to send $380,000 to environmental groups opposed to the delisting of wolves.

Based on these facts I would have to agree with Ken's conclusion that, ''the Equal Access to Justice Act is being applied less than equally by the Federal Government. It appears that if they agree with you they will send you a check, but if they do not they will send you an attorney's response denying you your money.''

This administration should not be in the business of playing favorites by rewarding their political friends with taxpayer dollars. I commend Ken for highlighting the apparent inequality and abuse of the so-called Equal Access to Justice Act. This is one of the reasons I plan to continue fighting for real transparency regarding which groups are receiving EAJA payments, why they are receiving it, and how much money—taxpayer money—is being given away. It is time the Equal Access to Justice Act truly live up to its name.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

[From the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Opinion Editorial, Mar. 26, 2013]

EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR A FEW

(By Ken Hamilton, Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation, Executive Vice President)

Many people are aware of the efforts to reform the Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) in order to bring more transparency to the process of the federal government paying attorney fees. Based on information researched and brought to light through the Budd-Falen law offices we found out that monies were being awarded without the slightest effort by the government to keep track of who received them and why. Thus, the need for some transparency and oversight. We have also seen some of the recipients fight efforts to bring transparency and why wouldn't they? After all, this is something that helps off-set their cost of suing the federal government.

The other aspect of this that some have wondered about is the sometimes cozy appearance between these groups who sue the federal government and the desire by the government to help pay their way.

Recently, several environmental groups settled with the federal government over their attorney fees for suing the Fish and Wildlife Service on wolf delisting efforts in Montana and Idaho. The settlement agreed to by the federal government will pay the groups $380,000 for their attorney fees. This request for money was filed with the courts in November of 2012 and the government didn't object to this filing.

Meanwhile back at the ranch, the Wyoming Wolf Coalition through its attorney Harriet Hageman, has asked the federal government for their fees under EAJA. These fees, a tenth of the environmental claim, have been argued over by the same federal government since April of 2011.

Given this interesting development it certainly appears the federal government, through the Justice Department, does not apply justice uniformly. Perhaps the Justice Department is concerned that these multi-million dollar environmental groups should be paid because they have resources far beyond the troublesome rancher, sportsmen, outfitters and local governments and they could use the money but those other entities should be denied because they are poor.

Perhaps they feel that almost $400,000 is not a big deal, but $36,000 is a huge deal worthy of Justice Department attorney time to file objections.

Who knows, but one thing is apparent and that is the Equal Access to Justice Act is being applied less than equally by the federal government. It appears that if they agree with you they will send you a check, but if they do not they will send you an attorney's response denying you your money.

GRASSBAUGH VETERANS PROJECT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the commencement of the Captain Jonathan D. Grassbaugh Veterans Project. CPT Jonathan Grassbaugh and three other soldiers were killed in action in Iraq on April 7, 2007, when an insurgent detonated a 500-pound explosive beneath their truck. His wife, CPT Jenna C. Grassbaugh, has collaborated with the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law to create the Captain Jonathan D. Grassbaugh Veterans Project. The Jonathan D. Grassbaugh Veterans Project will provide veterans returning from deployment with legal assistance, with the help of law students aided by professional lawyers.

CPT Jenna Grassbaugh donated $250,000 of her husband's life insurance policy to the Moritz College of Law in order to honor her husband's legacy and assist returning veterans. The Grassbaugh Veterans Project will open in April and will be operational by fall 2014.

I would also like to pay tribute to Jonathan D. Grassbaugh and the rich legacy he leaves. His commitment to service is an inspiration to all of us and he will not be forgotten. I would also like to recognize CPT Jenna Grassbaugh for honoring the legacy of her husband in such a meaningful way.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL KENNETH W. McDONALD

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the accomplishments of LTC

Kenneth McDonald, who is retiring this month after a distinguished career of over 28 years of service to the United States Army and the Nation.

Lieutenant Colonel McDonald graduated from West Point in 1985 with a degree in Civil Engineering and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He subsequently served as a platoon leader, support platoon leader, and executive officer in the 299th Engineer Battalion (Corps Combat) at Fort Sill, OK. He later commanded Delta Company, 20th Engineer Battalion at Fort Campbell, KY and served as S3 and executive officer for the 577th Engineer Battalion, Fort Leonard Wood, MO.

Throughout his career, Lieutenant Colonel McDonald deployed to Iraq for Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Kosovo, and Korea. In 2006, Kenny volunteered for service in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and served as deputy commander, Gulf Region Division South District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Basrah. During his 2 year tour, he was responsible for over $500 million worth of construction projects, including the Basrah Children's Hospital. In 2008, he and members of his team were severely wounded in an ambush while they were inspecting the hospital. He recovered from his wounds at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and later was assigned to the West Point Warrior Transition Unit. While still assigned to the WTU, he requested and was allowed to serve as the deputy commander, New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Lieutenant Colonel McDonald also served as an instructor and assistant professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering and the Department of Civil and Mechanical Engineering at West Point. In 2009, he was promoted to associate professor and served as engineering program director for the Department of Systems Engineering at West Point. During his tenure, the Engineering Management Program was recognized 3 years in a row as the top Engineering Management Program for undergraduate education in the Nation by the American Society for Engineering Management.

His military awards and decorations include the Bronze Star; Purple Heart; Meritorious Service Medal; Joint Service Commendation Medal; Army Commendation Medal; Army Achievement Medal; Joint Meritorious Unit Award; Meritorious Unit Commendation; Army Superior Unit Award; Air Assault; Airborne; Ranger Tab; and Combat Action Badge.

Kenny and his wife COL Debbie McDonald, who currently serves as the director of admissions at West Point, have two grown children. Their daughter Anna is a 1LT Quartermaster Officer and Company Commander and their son Joshua is a cadet at West Point. I congratulate Kenny on a job well done, and wish him and his family the very best in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO GORDON MOULTON

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Gordon Moulton in honor of his retirement after 46 years of service to the University of South Alabama. Gordon dedicated his life to the success of the university and its surrounding communities and served as university president for 16 years. I am honored to call this remarkable man my friend and fellow Alabamian.

Gordon received his B.S. in Industrial Management from the Georgia Institute of Technology and an M.B.A. from Emory University. He was also awarded an honorary doctorate from Spring Hill College in 2006.

He began his service at the University of South Alabama 3 years after its founding in 1966 as a business faculty member and went on to launch the School of Computer and Information Sciences as its first dean. He was named president of the university in 1998. Gordon's numerous successes at the university include increasing academic programs and scholarships, securing grants for cancer research, expanding student opportunities, development and renovation of various facilities, and the creation of the USA Research and Technology Park which has provided many jobs and opportunities for high-tech industry partnerships in south Alabama.

During his tenure as President, the University of South Alabama was able to launch ''Campaign USA,'' a highly successful fundraising effort that has raised millions for the university. He also worked to form a critical partnership with Infirmary Health System which has been instrumental in making improvements in area health care. For his work in the area, Gordon was named ''Mobilian of the Year'' in 2002.

Over the years, Gordon and his wife Geri have donated generously to the University of South Alabama, most recently presenting the University with $3 million in order to fund cancer research at the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute. Their generosity, compassion, and dedication to finding a cure for cancer is both admirable and humbling. In addition to funding for cancer research, they have given millions to fund Moulton Tower and Alumni Plaza, Geri Moulton Children's Park at the USA Children's and Women's Hospital, and various scholarships and athletic endeavors.

Today, it is rare to see an individual so invested in one institution for the larger part of his career, but the work that Gordon Moulton has done at and for the University of the South will forever be remembered by its students, faculty, board of trustees, and the communities in and around Mobile that have benefitted from the University.

I congratulate him on his retirement and thank him for his decades of service to one of Alabama's great educational institutions.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN

• Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I rise in support of Friends of the Children, FOTC, a revolutionary organization founded and based in my hometown of Portland, OR, that provides intensive, long-term mentors to highly vulnerable kids in need. FOTC takes a preventive, early intervention approach that breaks the cycle of poverty and helps children grow up to be productive citizens.

The key to FOTC's success is its mentors, called Friends. Each Friend is full time, paid and professionally trained. The Friends are matched with the most severely at-risk children at an early age—selected in kindergarten—and make a 12½ year commitment to each child, guiding them through high school graduation.

Friends of the Children was founded in 1993 and is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. My friend Duncan Campbell, founder of FOTC, grew up in poverty himself, and his persistence, hard work and entrepreneurial spirit continue to be a driving force behind FOTC's success.

The goals for FOTC's children are both simple and profound: success in school with a minimum of a high school diploma or GED; avoid involvement in the juvenile justice system, and avoid early parenting. And independent research has shown that Friends of the Children is achieving those goals: 85 percent of FOTC graduates have completed high school, despite 54 percent having a parent who did not graduate; 97 percent of FOTC youth are not involved in the juvenile justice system despite 60 percent having a parent who has been incarcerated; and 98 percent of FOTC adolescents avoid early parenting despite 60 percent having been born to a teen mother.

Friends of the Children works because it treats every child as an individual facing a set of unique circumstances, and takes a committed, hands-on approach to improving those circumstances. It works because it focuses on one-on-one relationships using a rational, intelligent and proven system.

While headquartered in Portland, Friends of the Children now has chapters in four additional cities: Klamath Falls, Seattle, Boston and New York. Today, I am proud to congratulate this remarkable program on its 20th anniversary, and look forward to celebrating many more years of its continued success.•

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014—PM 7

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying

report; which was referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975 as modified by the order of April 11, 1986; to the Committees on Appropriations; and the Budget:

THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

To the Congress of the United States:

Thanks to the hard work and determination of the American people, we have made significant progress over the last 4 years. After a decade of war, our brave men and women in uniform are coming home. After years of recession, our businesses have created over six million new jobs. We buy more American cars than we have in 5 years, and less foreign oil than we have in 20 years. Our housing market is healing, our stock market is rebounding, and consumers, patients, and homeowners enjoy stronger protections than ever before.

But we know that there are millions of Americans whose hard work and dedication have not yet been rewarded. Our economy is adding jobs—but too many people still cannot find full-time employment. Corporate profits have skyrocketed to all-time highs—but for more than a decade, wages and incomes have barely budged.

It is our generation's task to reignite the true engine of America's economic growth—a rising, thriving middle class. It is our unfinished task to restore the basic bargain that built this country—the idea that if you work hard and meet your responsibilities, you can get ahead, no matter where you come from, no matter what you look like, or whom you love.

It is our unfinished task to make sure that this Government works on behalf of the many, and not just the few; that it encourages free enterprise, rewards individual initiative, and opens the doors of opportunity to every child across this great Nation.

A growing economy that creates good, middle class jobs—this must be the North Star that guides our efforts. Every day, we should ask ourselves three questions as a Nation: How do we attract more jobs to our shores? How do we equip our people with the skills they need to get those jobs? And how do we make sure that hard work leads to a decent living?

This Budget seeks to answer each of these questions.

Our first priority is making America a magnet for new jobs and manufacturing. After shedding jobs for more than 10 years, our manufacturers have added more than 500,000 jobs over the past 3 years. Companies large and small are increasingly deciding to bring jobs back to America.

To accelerate this trend, the Budget builds on the success of the manufacturing innovation institute we created in Youngstown, Ohio last year, and calls for the creation of a network of 15 of these hubs across the Nation. In these innovation hubs, businesses will partner with universities and Federal agencies to turn regions around our country into global centers of high-tech jobs.

The Budget also includes new initiatives to support manufacturing communities, including a new tax credit to strengthen their ability to attract investments and jobs. And it expands my Administration's SelectUSA initiative to help draw businesses and investment from around the world to our shores.

If we want to make the best products, we also have to invest in the best ideas. That is why the Budget maintains a world-class commitment to science and research, targeting resources to those areas most likely to contribute directly to the creation of transformational technologies that can create the businesses and jobs of the future.

No area holds more promise than our investments in American energy. The Budget continues to advance my ''all-of-the-above'' strategy on energy, investing in clean energy research and development; promoting energy efficiency in our cars, homes, and businesses; encouraging responsible domestic energy production; and launching new efforts to combat the threat of climate change.

Modeled after my successful Race to the Top education reform effort, the Budget includes a new Race to the Top energy efficiency challenge for States, rewarding those that implement the most effective policies to cut energy waste. And it establishes a new Energy Security Trust funded by royalty revenue from oil and gas leases to support initiatives to shift our cars and trucks off oil, cutting our Nation's reliance on foreign oil.

Over the last 4 years, we have begun the hard work of rebuilding our Nation's infrastructure. We have built or improved over 350,000 miles of road and more than 6,000 miles of rail. And we have repaired or replaced over 20,000 bridges. But to compete in the 21st Century economy and become a magnet for jobs, we must do more. We need to repair our existing infrastructure, and invest in the infrastructure of tomorrow, including high-speed rail, high-tech schools, and self-healing power grids. These investments will both lay the foundation for long-term economic growth and put workers back on the job now.

My Budget includes $50 billion for upfront infrastructure investments, including a ''Fix-it-First'' program that makes an immediate investment to put people to work as soon as possible on our most urgent repairs, like the nearly 70,000 structurally-deficient bridges across the country. And to make sure taxpayers do not shoulder the whole burden, the Budget creates a Rebuild America Partnership to attract private capital to upgrade what our businesses need most: modern ports to move our goods; modern pipelines to withstand a storm; and modern schools worthy of our children.

The Budget also supports efforts I announced earlier this year to modernize and improve the efficiency of the Federal permitting process, cutting through the red tape that has been holding back even some of the most carefully planned infrastructure projects. These efforts will help us to achieve the new goal I set to cut timelines in half for infrastructure projects, while creating new incentives for better outcomes for communities and the environment.

All of these initiatives in manufacturing, energy, and infrastructure will help entrepreneurs and small business owners expand and create new jobs. But none of it will matter unless we also equip our citizens with the skills and training to fill those jobs.

And that has to start at the earliest possible age. But today, fewer than 3 in 10 4-year-olds are enrolled in a high-quality preschool program, and the high cost of private preschool puts too much of a financial burden on middle class families.

The Budget therefore includes a proposal that ensures 4-year-olds across the country have access to high-quality preschool education through a landmark new initiative in partnership with the States. And it increases the availability of early learning for our youngest children to help their growth and development during the formative early years of life.

Providing a year of free, public preschool education for 4-year-old children is an important investment in our future. It will give all our kids the best start in life, helping them perform better in elementary school and ultimately helping them, and the country, be better prepared for the demands of the global economy. Not only that, it could save hard-working families thousands of dollars each year in child care costs. This is an investment we need to make, and it is fully paid for in this Budget by imposing a new tax on every pack of cigarettes sold.

The Budget also builds on the historic reforms made during my first term to improve our elementary and secondary school system by rewarding excellence and promoting innovation. To help ensure that our high schools are putting our kids on a path to college and a good job, the Budget includes a new competitive fund that will help redesign America's high schools to prepare students with the real world skills they need to find a job right away or go to college. The fund rewards schools that develop new partnerships with colleges and employers, and create classes focusing on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)—the skills today's employers seek to fill the jobs available right now and in the future.

Even with better high schools, most young people will still need some higher education. Through tax credits, grants, and better loans, we have made college more affordable for millions of students and families over the last 4 years. But skyrocketing costs are still pricing too many young people out of a higher education, or saddling them with unsustainable debt. And taxpayers cannot continue to subsidize

higher and higher costs for higher education.

To encourage colleges to do their part to keep costs down, the Budget includes reforms that will ensure affordability and value are considered in determining which colleges receive certain types of Federal aid. My Administration has also released a new ''College Scorecard'' that parents and students can use to compare schools.

To further ensure our educational system is preparing students for careers in the 21st Century economy, the Budget includes additional measures to promote STEM education, such as launching a new STEM Master Teacher Corps, to leverage the expertise of some of America's best and brightest teachers in science and mathematics, and to elevate the teaching of these subjects nationwide. It also includes a reorganization and consolidation of STEM education programs to improve the effectiveness of Federal investments in this area.

The Budget takes other critical steps to grow our economy, create jobs, and strengthen the middle class. It implements the Affordable Care Act, giving every American access to the high-quality, affordable health care coverage they deserve, and reducing the deficit by more than $1 trillion over the next two decades. It implements Wall Street reform, ending too-big-to-fail and protecting consumers against the abuses and reckless behavior that contributed to the financial collapse in 2008. And it includes measures to strengthen our housing market and ensure that every responsible homeowner has the opportunity to refinance at today's rates, saving $3,000 a year on average.

Our economy is stronger when we harness the talents and ingenuity of striving, hopeful immigrants. That is why I have proposed a plan to fix our broken immigration system that secures our borders, cracks down on employers who hire undocumented workers, attracts highly-skilled entrepreneurs and engineers to help create jobs and drive economic growth, and establishes a responsible pathway to earned citizenship—a path that includes passing a background check, paying taxes and a meaningful penalty, learning English, and going to the back of the line behind the folks trying to come here legally. The Budget makes investments that will make our immigration system more efficient and fair and lay a foundation for this permanent, common-sense reform.

The Budget also builds on the progress made over the last 4 years to expand opportunity for every American and every community willing to do the work to lift themselves up. It creates new ladders of opportunity to ensure that hard work leads to a decent living. It rewards hard work by increasing the minimum wage to $9 an hour so an honest day's work pays more. It partners with communities by identifying Promise Zones to help rebuild from the recession. It creates pathways to jobs for the long-term unemployed and youth who have been hardest hit by the downturn. And it strengthens families by removing financial deterrents to marriage and supporting the role of fathers.

We also know that economic growth can only be achieved and sustained if America is safe and secure, both at home and abroad. At home, the Budget supports my initiative to help protect our kids, reduce gun violence, and expand access to mental health services. We can protect our Second Amendment rights while coming together around reforms like eliminating background check loopholes to make it harder for criminals to get their hands on a gun—common-sense reforms that will help protect our kids from the scourge of gun violence that has plagued too many communities across the country.

To confront threats outside our borders, the Budget ensures our military remains the finest and best-equipped military force the world has ever known, even as we wind down more than a decade of war.

Already, we have brought home more than 30,000 of our brave servicemembers from Afghanistan. Our remaining forces are moving into a support role, with Afghan security forces taking the lead. And over the next year, another 34,000 American troops will come home. This drawdown will continue and, by the end of next year, our war in Afghanistan will be over. Beyond 2014, the Budget supports our continued commitment to a unified and sovereign Afghanistan.

To maintain our national security, the Budget supports our ongoing fight against terrorists, like al Qaeda. The organization that attacked us on 9/11 is a shadow of its former self. But different al Qaeda affiliates and extremist groups have emerged—from the Arabian Peninsula to Africa. We will confront these emerging security challenges through the full range of U.S. capabilities and tools, including diplomatic, security, intelligence, and economic development.

The Budget also provides the resources we need to act on our commitment to and interests in global development, by promoting food security that reduces dependence and increases prosperity; by investing in the increasingly successful drive toward an AIDS-free generation; and by maintaining our leadership as a global provider of humanitarian assistance that saves lives and reflects American values.

We must also confront new dangers, like cyber attacks, that threaten our Nation's infrastructure, businesses, and people. The Budget supports the expansion of Government-wide efforts to counter the full scope of cyber threats, and strengthens our ability to collaborate with State and local governments, our partners overseas, and the private sector to improve our overall cybersecurity.

The Budget also focuses resources on the Asia-Pacific region, reasserting American leadership and promoting security, stability, democracy, and economic growth.

Importantly, the Budget upholds our solemn obligation to take care of our servicemembers and veterans, and to protect our diplomats and civilians in the field. It keeps faith with our veterans, investing in world-class care, including mental health care for our wounded warriors, supporting our military families, and giving our veterans the benefits, education, and job opportunities that they have earned.

The Budget does all of these things as part of a comprehensive plan that reduces the deficit. All of these initiatives and ideas are fully paid for, to ensure they do not increase the deficit by a single dime.

By making investments in our people that we pay for responsibly, we will strengthen the middle class, make America a magnet for jobs and innovation, and grow our economy, which will in turn help us to reduce deficits. But economic growth alone will not solve our Nation's long-term fiscal challenges.

As we continue to grow our economy, we must take further action to cut our deficits. We do not have to choose between these two important priorities—we have to do both.

Over the last 4 years, both parties have worked together to reduce the deficit in a balanced way by more than $2.5 trillion. That is more than halfway toward the goal of $4 trillion in deficit reduction that economists say we need to stabilize our finances. As we wind down two wars, we have protected our military families and veterans while cutting defense spending on outdated military weapons systems. Domestic discretionary spending is approaching its lowest levels as a share of the economy since President Eisenhower was in office; and we have moved aggressively to cut waste, fraud, and abuse. And together, we have begun to ask the wealthy to do their fair share while keeping income taxes low for middle class families. Overall, we have cut the deficit in a balanced way that protects the investments in education, manufacturing, clean energy, and small businesses we need to grow the economy and strengthen the middle class. There is more work to do, and this Budget is designed to finish the job.

But we should not do it by making harsh and arbitrary cuts that jeopardize our military readiness, devastate priorities like education and energy, and cost jobs. That is not how to grow the economy. We should not ask middle class senior citizens and working families to pay down the rest of our deficit while the wealthiest are asked for nothing more. That does not grow our middle class.

The American people understand that we cannot just cut our way to prosperity. That is why I have repeatedly called for a balanced approach to deficit reduction. And that is why I have offered proposals on multiple occasions that cut wasteful spending,

strengthen entitlements, and eliminate special tax breaks and loopholes so the wealthiest pay their fair share.

In my negotiations with House Speaker BOEHNER in December over the so-called ''fiscal cliff,'' I again offered a compromise proposal that was balanced and comprehensive, and would achieve our $4 trillion deficit reduction goal. That proposal is still on the table. I am including it in this Budget to demonstrate my commitment to making the kind of tough and balanced choices that are needed to put our Nation's finances in order.

To be clear, the package I am offering includes some difficult cuts that I do not particularly like. But these measures will only become law if congressional Republicans agree to meet me in the middle by eliminating special tax breaks and loopholes so millionaires and billionaires do their fair share to cut the deficit. I will not agree to any deal that seeks to cut the deficit on the backs of middle class families. I am willing to make tough choices that may not be popular within my own party, because there can be no sacred cows for either party. And I look forward to working with any member of Congress who takes a similar, balanced approach. This plan is built on the kind of common ground that Democrats and Republicans should be able to reach.

In total, the Budget will cut the deficit by another $1.8 trillion over the next 10 years, bringing the deficit below 2 percent of GDP by 2023 and putting our debt on a declining path. This is not an end in and of itself—the best way to grow the economy and cut the deficit is by creating good middle class jobs. But this plan to reduce the deficit in a balanced way is a critical step toward ensuring that we have a solid foundation on which to build a strong economy and a thriving middle class for years to come.

Finally, this Budget continues my commitment to reforming and streamlining our Government for the 21st Century. It builds on my Campaign to Cut Waste by further targeting and eliminating wasteful spending wherever we find it. It reorganizes and consolidates agencies and programs to make them leaner and more efficient. It increases the use of evidence and evaluation to ensure we are making smart investments with our scarce taxpayer dollars. And it harnesses new technologies to allow us to do more with less.

No single Budget can solve every challenge and every problem facing the country. But this Budget shows how we can live within our means while growing our economy, strengthening the middle class, and securing our Nation's future. It is not a Democratic plan or a Republican plan. It is an American plan. And it is a plan that I hope can serve as an outline for us to write the next great chapter of the American story . . . together.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 10, 2013.*

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:00 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 254. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to facilitate the development of hydroelectric power on the Diamond Fork System of the Central Utah Project.

H.R. 1033. An act to authorize the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 under the American Battlefield Protection Program.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1033. An act to authorize the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 under the American Battlefield Protection Program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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–1060. A communication from the Chief of the Border Securities Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Definition of Form I–94 to Include Electronic Format'' (RIN1651–AA96) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1061. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Excepted Service—Appointment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, Severe Physical Disabilities, and Psychiatric Disabilities'' (RIN3206–AM07) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1062. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals through the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1063. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''Audit of the Affordable Housing Mandates for Development Projects Formerly Managed by the Dissolved National Capital Revitalization Corporation and Anacostia Waterfront Corporation''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1064. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 19–670, ''Pharmacy Technician Amendment Act of 2012''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1065. A communication from the Secretary to the Board, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Railroad Retirement Board's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1066. A communication from the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1067. A communication from the Deputy Associate Director for External Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bureau's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1068. A communication from the Chief Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the District of Columbia Family Court Act; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1069. A joint communication from the Chairman and the Acting General Counsel, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Buy American Act Report for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1070. A communication from the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Annual Report on The Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1071. A communication from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''U.S. Department of Health and Human Services met Many Requirements of the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 but Was Not Fully Compliant''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1072. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's fiscal year 2012 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1073. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–29, ''Medical Marijuana Cultivation Center and Dispensary Location Restriction Temporary Amendment Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1074. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–40, ''Tax Revision Commission Report Extension and Procurement Streamlining Temporary Amendment Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1075. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–30, ''Board of Ethics and Government Accountability Temporary Amendment Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1076. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report

on D.C. Act 20–31, ''Prohibition on Government Employee Engagement in Political Activity Temporary Amendment Act of 2013''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1077. A communication from the Director of Equal Employment Opportunity, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1078. A communication from the Acting Director of the Peace Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Peace Corps' fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1079. A communication from the Equal Employment Opportunity Director, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Farm Credit Administration's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1080. A communication from the Executive Director, United States Access Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1081. A communication from the Chief Human Resources Officer, United States Postal Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Postal Service's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1082. A communication from the Chair of the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1083. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1084. A communication from the Associate Commissioner, National Indian Gaming Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1085. A communication from the Senior Vice President, Diversity and Labor Relations, Tennessee Valley Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1086. A communication from the Acting Administrator, General Service Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1087. A communication from the Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1088. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1089. A communication from the Chairman, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1090. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1091. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Authority's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1092. A communication from the Director, Equal Employment Opportunities and Diversity Programs, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1093. A communication from the Equal Employment Opportunity and Inclusion Director, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1094. A communication from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2012 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1095. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13–035, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1096. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13–059, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1097. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13–030, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1098. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13–017, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1099. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13–015, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1100. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13–043); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1101. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13–044); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1102. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13–017); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1103. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to U.S. support for Taiwan's participation as an observer at the 66th World Health Assembly and in the work of the World Health Organization; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1104. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Implementation of the Defense Trade Cooperation Treaty Between the United States and Australia'' (RIN1400–AD38) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2012; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1105. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the current and future military strategy of Iran (OSS 2013–0463); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1106. A communication from the Board of Actuaries, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2012 Report of the Department of Defense (DoD) Board of Actuaries; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1107. A communication from the Acting Director, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's annual report on the activities of its Office of Minority and Women Inclusion; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1108. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's 2012 Statement on System of Internal Controls, audited financial statements, Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm, and Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with Government Auditing Standards; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1109. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to sequestration; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC–1110. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to discretionary appropriations legislation; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC–1111. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Reporting Procedure for Mathematical Models Selected to Predict Heated Effluent Dispersion in Natural Water Bodies'' (Regulatory Guide 4.4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2013; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1112. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Final Integrated Construction Report and Environmental Impact Statement for the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA), Barataria Basin Barrier Shoreline (BBBS) Restoration Project, Lafourche, Jefferson and Plaquemines Parishes, Louisiana; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. HARKIN for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*Jenny R. Yang, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2017.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COATS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNS, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. PAUL, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 692. A bill to rescind certain Federal funds identified by States as unwanted and use the funds to reduce the Federal debt; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 693. A bill to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the City of Hermiston, Oregon, water recycling and reuse project, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 694. A bill to remove the authority of the Agricultural Marketing Service to inspect apples; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 695. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the authorization of appropriations for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay a monthly assistance allowance to disabled veterans training or competing for the Paralympic Team and the authorization of appropriations for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide assistance to United States Paralympics, Inc., and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. REID (for Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. BAUCUS, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. BENNET, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COWAN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. WARREN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. NELSON, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. KING)):

S. 696. A bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to ensure that risks from chemicals are adequately understood and managed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BROWN:

S. 697. A bill to reform and improve the oversight of the performance of passenger and baggage security screening at domestic commercial airports by private screening companies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 698. A bill to protect prosecutors, judges, law enforcement officers, and their families; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 699. A bill to reallocate Federal judgeships for the courts of appeals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. 700. A bill to ensure that the education and training provided members of the Armed Forces and veterans better assists members and veterans in obtaining civilian certifications and licenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 701. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of the individual mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. COWAN):

S. 702. A bill to designate the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor as ''The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. Res. 95. A resolution recognizing linemen, the profession of linemen, the contributions of these brave men and women who protect the public safety, and expressing support for the designation of April 18, 2013, as National Lineman Appreciation Day; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mrs. HAGAN):

S. Con. Res. 12. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that our current tax incentives for retirement savings provide important benefits to Americans to help plan for a financially secure retirement; to the Committee on Finance.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 84

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 84, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 123

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 123, a bill to modernize voter registration, promote access to voting for individuals with disabilities, protect the ability of individuals to exercise the right to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes.

S. 155

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 155, a bill to designate a mountain in the State of Alaska as Denali.

S. 231

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 231, a bill to reauthorize the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp.

S. 234

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 234, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who

have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 264

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 264, a bill to expand access to community mental health centers and improve the quality of mental health care for all Americans.

S. 316

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) were added as cosponsors of S. 316, a bill to recalculate and restore retirement annuity obligations of the United States Postal Service, to eliminate the requirement that the United States Postal Service prefund the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund, to place restrictions on the closure of postal facilities, to create incentives for innovation for the United States Postal Service, to maintain levels of postal service, and for other purposes.

S. 338

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 338, a bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the land and water conservation fund to maximize the effectiveness of the fund for future generations, and for other purposes.

S. 381

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 381, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the ''Doolittle Tokyo Raiders'', for outstanding heroism, valor, skill, and service to the United States in conducting the bombings of Tokyo.

S. 450

At the request of Mr. SHELBY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 450, a bill to require enhanced economic analysis and justification of regulations proposed by certain Federal banking, housing, securities, and commodity regulators, and for other purposes.

S. 457

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 457, a bill to posthumously award a Congressional gold medal to Alice Paul, in recognition of her role in the women's suffrage movement and in advancing equal rights for women.

S. 462

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 462, a bill to enhance the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel.

S. 480

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 480, a bill to improve the effectiveness of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System by clarifying reporting requirements related to adjudications of mental incompetency, and for other purposes.

S. 557

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 557, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program.

S. 577

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 577, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the distribution of additional residency positions, and for other purposes.

S. 649

At the request of Mr. KAINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 649, a bill to ensure that all individuals who should be prohibited from buying a firearm are listed in the national instant criminal background check system and require a background check for every firearm sale, and for other purposes.

S. 655

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. COWAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 655, a bill to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to authorize the Secretary of Labor to provide grants for Urban Jobs Programs, and for other purposes.

S. 687

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 687, a bill to prohibit the closing of air traffic control towers, and for other purposes.

S. 689

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 689, a bill to reauthorize and improve programs related to mental health and substance use disorders.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 693. A bill to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the City of Hermiston, Oregon, water recycling and reuse project, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I rise to reintroduce legislation that will authorize the Bureau of Reclamation to share in the cost of the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant for Hermiston, Oregon. This is the same bill that was passed by the House of Representatives, by voice vote, in the 111th Congress and reported by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee without opposition that Congress as well. I look forward to working with supporters of this bill to advance this important reclamation project.

The city of Hermiston will be responsible for the lion's share of this project. CBO has estimated that the Federal share of the $26 million project would be $7 million or just over ¼ of the cost. Once constructed, the plant will provide the Bureau of Reclamation-authorized West Extension Irrigation District with enough additional high-quality water per year to irrigate approximately 600 acres of high value crops. This will have a significant, long-term benefit to the farming industry in the Hermiston area.

The Hermiston project has gotten the sign-off at every level from the local irrigation district to Federal agencies. The city and the bureau have completed the required feasibility report and the bureau of reclamation has formally concluded that the project meets the requirements of the Title XVI cost-sharing program. The regional office of the National Marine Fisheries Service at NOAA has completed a biological opinion approving the project. The city and the West Extension Irrigation District have signed a memorandum of understanding to work together to develop the project. The bureau has concluded its environmental review of the authorization to transfer the water to they district and issued a finding of no significant impact, or FONSI.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation have also recognized the benefits of the project and support it. These benefits include a significant improvement in the quality of water discharged to the Umatilla River in winter and protection of sensitive fish habitat during summer. These benefits have led the tribe to endorse construction of the Hermiston Water Recycling System Improvement Project and the city's effort to obtain Federal funding.

This project will increase agricultural production while improving the local economy, the environment and habitat for endangered fish. I intend to

work with colleagues to complete action on legislation that has advanced so far in previous Congresses.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 695. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the authorization of appropriations for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay a monthly assistance allowance to disabled veterans training or competing for the Paralympic Team and the authorization of appropriations for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide assistance to United States Paralympics, Inc., and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, physical activity offers injured members of the Armed Forces and veterans additional opportunities for rehabilitation for both physical and mental health. Using the expertise of the United States Olympic Committee to work with local programs is a great tool to help our veterans improve their quality of life. The U.S. Paralympic Integrated Adaptive Sports Program partners with local organizations to develop programs and skills that meet the needs of our wounded warriors. As a result of this legislation, the program has reached more than 5,000 participants in more than 150 communities in 46 States and has successfully collaborated with 85 VA Medical Centers in 39 States to provide adaptive sports programs to veterans in their local communities through outreach programs, training, practices, camps, clinics, and competitions. For this reason, Senator BEGICH and I are introducing Veterans Paralympic Act of 2013, which would extend the authorization for the U.S. Paralympic Integrated Adaptive Sports Program through 2018.

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. 695

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 ''Veterans Paralympic Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR PAYMENT OF A MONTHLY ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE TO DISABLED VETERANS TRAINING OR COMPETING FOR THE PARALYMPIC TEAM.

Section 322(d)(4) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking ''2013'' and inserting ''2018''.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE TO UNITED STATES PARALYMPICS, INC.

Section 521A of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (g), by striking ''2013'' and inserting ''2018''; and

(2) in subsection (l), by striking ''2013'' and inserting ''2018''.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 699. A bill to reallocate Federal judgeships for the courts of appeals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. President, today I am introducing the Court Efficiency Act, a bill that will help some of the nation's busiest courts. Hopefully, it will also ease some of the tension that arises during debates of D.C. Circuit Court nominees. I am pleased that Senators HATCH, SESSIONS, GRAHAM, CORNYN, LEE, CRUZ, and FLAKE are original co-sponsors.

It is no secret that the D.C. Circuit is the least-busy, least-worked appellate court in the nation. By nearly every measurement taken by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the D.C. Circuit comes in a distant last. Here are three of the most common measurements using the most recent data available for the 12 months ending September 30, 2012.

First, ''Total Appeals Filed.'' Total Appeals Filed measures the amount of work coming into the court. Simply put, it is the total number of appeals that a circuit court received in the last 12 months. The D.C. Circuit has 108 appeals per authorized judgeship, the lowest in the nation. To put this in perspective, the Second Circuit is 4 times higher and the Eleventh Circuit, the busiest in the nation, is more than five times as high, with 583 appeals filed per authorized judge.

Next, ''Total Appeals Terminated'' measures the amount of work the court is accomplishing. Once again, the D.C. Circuit is by far the lowest in the nation with 108 total appeals terminated per authorized judgeship. By comparison, the Second Circuit is 4 times higher and the Eleventh Circuit is 5 times higher, at 540 appeals terminated per authorized judgeship.

Finally, ''Total Appeals Pending'' measures the amount of work before the court. In other words, it is the number of appeals the court hasn't yet addressed or the cases that are outstanding. The D.C. Circuit has 120 appeals pending per authorized judgeship, which means it is essentially tied for last with the Tenth Circuit that has 115. In contrast, the Second Circuit and the Eleventh Circuit have 343 and 323 appeals pending per authorized judgeship, respectively.

Back during President Bush's administration, my friends on the other side of the aisle cited the light work load of that court in order to block qualified, non-controversial nominees. Since that time, the D.C. Circuit Court workload has only continued to decrease.

Considering the imbalance between the workloads of the Circuits, my bill essentially reallocates those vacancies to other circuits that are much busier. The Court Efficiency Act does four things. First, it adds one seat to the Second Circuit. Second, it adds one seat to the Eleventh Circuit. Third, it reduces the number of authorized judgeships for the D.C. Circuit from 11 to 8. Fourth, it would become effective upon enactment.

Adopting this bill would be a step towards rectifying the great workload disparities between the circuit courts. The Court Efficiency Act would ease some of the pressure on the Second and Eleventh circuits. By moving just one judgeship each to the Second and Eleventh circuits, we would lower each circuit's respective workload by approximately 7.5 percent. This reduction can be accomplished without jeopardizing the D.C. Circuit's status as the ''least-busy Circuit.'' Even after the D.C. Circuit is reduced to 8 seats, it would still be roughly half as busy as the Circuit median in appeals filed, terminated, and pending per authorized judgeship.

I would also like to highlight several things that this bill will not do. First, it would not impact the President's current nominee to the D.C. Circuit, Mr. Srinivasan, whose hearing occurred earlier today. Instead, for the remaining three seats, it removes one and reallocates the other two.

Second, the bill would not affect the president's opportunity to nominate two of those Circuit court vacancies. It simply reassigns those vacancies to other circuits that are clearly busier.

Third, this legislation will be effective immediately, rather than postponing until the beginning of the next presidential term, as has been in the past. Immediate enactment will empower the President to quickly act to alleviate some of the heavy workloads of the Second and Eleventh Circuits.

The bill will also save the taxpayer a significant amount of money annually. Although the bill has not been scored yet by the CBO, this estimate is based on previous estimates offered by the CBO when it has scored judgeship bills.

The last time the D.C. Circuit had 11 nominees was the end of 1999. I want to move past the disagreements over the D.C. Circuit and shift these judges to circuits where there is a greater need to fill them.

This is a common sense bill. It moves judges to where they are needed, a significant step in addressing the severe imbalance in the workloads of some of these circuit courts. It saves the taxpayers money. It doesn't negatively impact the D.C. Circuit Court. It won't affect President Obama's current nominee, Mr. Srinivasan. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of this 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. 699

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 ''Court Efficiency Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. REALLOCATION OF FEDERAL JUDGESHIPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate—

(1) 1 additional circuit judge for the second circuit court of appeals; and

(2) 1 additional circuit judge for the eleventh circuit court of appeals.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 44(a) of title 28, United States Code, is amended in the table—

(1) in the item relating to the District of Columbia circuit court of appeals, by striking ''11'' and inserting ''8'';

(2) in the item relating to the second circuit court of appeals, by striking ''13'' and inserting ''14''; and

(3) in the item relating to the eleventh circuit court of appeals, by striking ''12'' and inserting ''13''.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 701. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of the individual mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. 700. A bill to ensure that the education and training provided members of the Armed Forces and veterans better assists members and veterans in obtaining civilian certifications and licenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce my first bill as a US Senator. It has been delivered to the desk. The bill is the Troop Talent Act of 2013. I am pleased to note it is cosponsored by Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS and Senator MAX BAUCUS.

The bill begins with a problem which I know concerns all Americans, the unemployment rate of our veterans. Currently, the national unemployment rate average is 7.6 percent, but the unemployment rate for veterans is 9.4 percent. That unemployment rate is particularly acute for veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We can't be comfortable if we see the statistic that our veterans have a higher unemployment rate than the national average. It should be otherwise.

In Virginia, where one in nine of our citizens, one in nine of our 8 million citizens from birth to death is a veteran, this is a particularly acute challenge. Frankly, it is only going to get worse as more and more people exit military service in the drawdown from Afghanistan.

What is the reason for the veterans' unemployment rate being higher than the national average? Some of the reasons have to do with medical challenges and issues which are in the province of the VA. I learned of another reason as I was campaigning across the State for 19 months. I heard stories from veterans, and they would say the following: I was in the military. I was a battlefield medic. I got out of the military and tried to get a job as a physician's assistant or a nurse, and I was told I had no credit for all my military service as I tried to transition into the civilian world.

Another stated: I maintained Naval aviation engines for 20 years. Then when I finished and tried to do the same thing on the civilian side, I was told I had to go back and start as if I had no experience.

Another: I operated heavy equipment, but I was told I would need a commercial driver's license.

Many of the members of our military—all of them are gaining skills along the way, but they go into a civilian workforce where their skills and talents are not recognized. In some ways this is a feature of an all-volunteer military. When we had a draft and men were compelled to serve, someone departing military service would go into the workforce and say they were a gunnery sergeant in the Marine Corps or an E–5 in the Navy, and someone in the workforce would know what it was they had done.

Today only 1 percent of our adults serve in the military. We appreciate what our military members do, but we don't understand their technical skills or their leadership talent.

This is the genesis for the Troop Talent Act of 2013. It is to make sure military members, while they are active, are getting recognized, credentialed credit for the skills they obtain, which will help them get immediate traction back into the civilian workforce.

The True Talent Act has three pillars: The first is the credentialing of military members for the skills they have obtained and the sharing of information between the military branches about the skills they have with servicemembers, the private sector, and with agencies who would credential them with a civilian credential. This is the first pillar, credentialing people for the skills people obtain.

The second pillar is a bit of a policing function. Sometimes folks will prey upon people leaving the military and say: Pay me $500, and I will administer a test which will give you a credential. Then it turns out their credential is worthless.

The VA had a working committee to police these credential-granting agencies to ensure no one was being ripped off. That committee no longer is in service. This bill would restart it.

Finally, the last thing this bill would do would be to take one particular industry sector, information technology, where there is a huge need to hire people and where our military members have significant skills, and this will accelerate credentialing traction for those members back into the military workforce.

There is a current pilot project DOD is working on with certain specialties but not IT. This would seek to expand the pilot programs to add IT to the list where people are credentialed.

In conclusion, this is about doing what the Nation should do for our servicemembers and making sure they receive the traction they deserve for the service they provided. It is not just about the members themselves, it is also about us. We have invested in our service men and women. They have skills, technical and leadership skills, which would help our society be more successful. To the extent we do not allow them traction back in the civilian life, we are not only depriving them, we are depriving ourselves of their strengths and talents.

I am pleased to introduce this bill and honored to have Senators BAUCUS and CHAMBLISS as cosponsors.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today I am offering legislation correcting Obamacare's definition of a ''full-time'' employee to allow employees to work 40 hours a week without triggering penalties on the businesses that hire them. Currently, Obamacare defines an employee working just 30 hours a week as ''full time.''

Because Obamacare uses an unreasonably low threshold of 30 hours a week to define ''full time'' employees, some businesses are restricting their employees to no more than 29 hours of work per week, to ensure that their workers are considered ''part time'' for purposes of Obamacare. This is a consequence of the substantial penalties Obamacare imposes on businesses that reach a threshold of 50 ''full time'' employees, unless they provide expensive health care coverage which many small businesses simply can't afford.

The penalties imposed by Obamacare begin at $40,000 for businesses with 50 employees, plus $2,000 for each additional ''full-time equivalent'' employee. These penalties serve as a huge disincentive for businesses to grow or add jobs, particularly for firms close to the 50-job trigger.

One Maine business I know has 47 employees, and it would like to hire more but won't because of these onerous penalties. If more businesses follow suit, millions of American workers could find their hours, and their earnings, cut back. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics nearly 10.5 million Americans work between 30 and 35 hours per week. Another 9.7 million work between 35 and 40 hours per week. My bill will help protect these Americans who may otherwise find their hours curtailed and their earnings cut as a result of Obamacare.

Obamacare's definition of a ''full time'' employee is completely out-of-keeping with standard employment practices in the U.S. today. According to the American Time of Use Survey published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average American works 8.8 hours per day, which equates to 44 hours per week. Under Obamacare, working only 30 hours a week is considered ''full-time''—nearly one-third lower than actual practice.

Likewise, the Obamacare definition of ''full-time'' employee is one-quarter lower than the 40 hours per week used by the GAO in its study of the budget and staffing required by the Internal

Revenue Service to implement Obamacare. In that report, the GAO described a ''full time equivelant,'' or ''FTE,'' as: ''a measure of staff hours equal to those of an employee who works 2,080 hours per year, or 40 hours per week for 52 weeks.''

During consideration of the Budget resolution last month, the Senate adopted my amendment calling for legislation setting a more sensible definition of a ''full time'' employee for purposes of Obamacare penalties. That amendment was endorsed by the National Association of Manufacturers, and the National Education Association. The fact that these two organzitions—typically thought of as bookends on the political spectrum—would agree that Obamacare's definition of a ''full-time'' employee is broken illustrates how out-of-step it truly is.

Under my bill, a ''full time'' employee would be someone who works a 40-hour week. This is a sensible definition in keeping with actual practice. I urge my colleagues to support it.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 95—RECOGNIZING LINEMEN, THE PROFESSION OF LINEMEN, THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THESE BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN WHO PROTECT THE PUBLIC SAFETY, AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF APRIL 18, 2013, AS NATIONAL LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 95

Whereas the profession of linemen is steeped in personal, family, and professional tradition;

Whereas linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety heroes;

Whereas linemen work with thousands of volts of electricity high atop power lines 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to keep electricity flowing;

Whereas linemen must often work under dangerous conditions far from their families to construct and maintain the energy infrastructure of the United States;

Whereas linemen put their lives on the line every day with little recognition from the community regarding the danger of their work; and

Whereas April 18, 2013, would be an appropriate date to designate as National Lineman Appreciation Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the efforts of linemen in keeping the power on and protecting public safety; and

(2) supports the designation of April 18, 2013, as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 12—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS THAT OUR CURRENT TAX INCENTIVES FOR RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROVIDE IMPORTANT BENEFITS TO AMERICANS TO HELP PLAN FOR A FINANCIALLY SECURE RETIREMENT

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mrs. HAGAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. CON. RES. 12

Whereas private retirement plans in the United States paid out over $3,824,000,000,000 in benefits from 2000 through 2009, while public sector retirement plans paid out $2,651,000,000,000 during the same period, with both playing an essential role in providing retirement income for millions of our Nation's senior citizens;

Whereas there are approximately 670,000 private-sector defined contribution plans that are currently covering 67,000,000 participants, and over 48,000 private-sector defined benefit plans covering 44,000,000 participants;

Whereas $4,700,000,000,000 is held in 401(k), 403(b), 457 and similar defined contribution plans, $2,300,000,000,000 is held in private defined benefit plans, and another $4,900,000,000,000 is held in Individual Retirement Accounts, largely consisting of funds rolled over from employer-based retirement plans;

Whereas from 2000 through 2009, employers have contributed almost $3,500,000,000,000 to public and private retirement plans;

Whereas tax incentives are an important impetus for individuals to save for retirement and for employers to offer plans under our voluntary system;

Whereas generally, the taxation of amounts contributed to pension and retirement plans is simply deferred, not lost;

Whereas more than 70 percent of American workers making between $30,000 and $50,000 a year contribute to their own retirement when covered by a retirement plan at work;

Whereas under current law, if business owners and managers sponsor a retirement plan, they also must cover and provide benefits to lower-income and middle-income employees;

Whereas 401(k) and similar defined contribution plans have been enhanced over the years by Congress on a bipartisan basis;

Whereas the private retirement system in the United States is voluntary and is dependent on the willingness of business owners and corporations to adopt and maintain retirement plans; and

Whereas the United States system of employer-based retirement savings is designed to work together with other personal savings and the Social Security program to provide meaningful income replacement upon retirement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) tax incentives for retirement savings play an important role in encouraging employers to sponsor and maintain retirement plans and encouraging participants to contribute to such plans;

(2) existing tax incentives have increased the number of Americans who are covered by a retirement plan; and

(3) a reformed and simplified Federal tax code should include properly structured tax incentives to maintain and contribute to such plans and to strengthen retirement security for all Americans.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. 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 April 10, 2013, at 2:30 p.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The Committee will hold a hearing entitled, ''Expanding the Panama Canal: What Does it Mean for American Freight and Infrastructure?''

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 10, 2013, at 11 a.m., to hold a briefing entitled, ''Intelligence Update on Syria''.

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSIONS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 10, 2013, at 10 a.m. in SD–430.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 10, 2013, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Border Security: Frontline Perspectives on Progress and Remaining Challenges.''

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 10, 2013, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Identifying Barriers to Indian Housing Development and Finding Solutions''.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on April 10, 2013, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Judicial Nominations.''

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 10, 2013, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Tax-Related Identity Theft: An Epidemic Facing Seniors and Taxpayers.''

The Committee will meet in Room 562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building beginning at 2 p.m.

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

NATIONAL LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to S. Res. 95.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 95) recognizing linemen, the profession of linemen, the contributions of these brave men and women who protect public safety, and expressing support for the designation of April 18, 2013, as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 95) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2013

Mr. REID. I now ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow morning, Thursday, April 11, 2013; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 649, the gun safety legislation; further, that the time until 11 a.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes, and upon use or yielding back of that time, the Senate proceed to a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 649.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, about 11 o'clock tomorrow, then, we will have a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to the gun safety bill.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:45 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 11, 2013, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 10, 2013:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

SARAH JEWELL, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN MEMORY OF RICHARD A.HILL, JR.

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask that we acknowledge the significant contributions of a great public servant and loyal family man, Richard A. Hill, Jr., who was taken away too soon from us, and from his beloved wife Anne and their two fine children Regina and John. Richard Hill joined the Department of Health and Human Services in 1989, and later the Social Security Administration in 1995, following successful completion of Fordham School of Law where he earned honors, demonstrating the same dedication and drive that was to characterize his successful performance of duty in later years. Richard Hill was always mindful of the vital role that the Social Security Administration's program played in the lives of the American people. He received numerous awards recognizing his service, including Vice President Albert Gore's Government Reinvention "Hammer" Award, Commissioner of Social Security Citations, and most recently the Louis J. Lefkowitz Public Service Award from his alma mater, Fordham School of Law. As attorney, supervisor, Deputy Regional Chief Counsel, and Director of Learning Initiatives at the Social Security Administration's Office of the General Counsel, Richard Hill had inexhaustible passion, a natural intellectual curiosity, and a never–ending wealth of information regarding the work he did at the Social Security Administration. As Director of Learning Initiatives, Richard Hill developed, shaped, and implemented the Office of the General Counsel's national training program for its new attorneys, and he was most proud of his part in training young attorneys en route to careers dedicated to helping others. Richard Hill's warm and kind spirit, collaborative nature, and unparalleled dedication to federal service and the American people will truly be missed.

IN HONOR OF THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PACIFIC GROVE

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the First United Methodist Church of Pacific Grove on the 50th anniversary of the relocation of their campus from downtown to its current site at the corner of Sunset Drive and the historic Seventeen Mile Drive.

In the early 1870s, a group of ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in California began the search for a site to build a summer retreat. They found the perfect spot in the pine woods on the point of the Monterey Peninsula, and in 1875 the Pacific Grove Retreat Association was formed. Modeled after the popular Chautauqua program in New York, the Retreat attracted hundreds of campers every year. A hall was built to house the Chautauqua events and provide a place of worship. Lots were sold and a tent village emerged. The healthy climate and beautiful scenery attracted a year–round population and over time the tents were replaced with permanent homes. In 1888, the cornerstone was laid for a sanctuary and the following year Pacific Grove was incorporated as a town.

The old church building was famous for its twin spires and lighted, revolving cross that could be seen for miles out to sea. Over the years, guest speakers included Presidents Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, and Theodore Roosevelt, as well as Susan B. Anthony, Georgia Harkness, and Maud Booth. By the 1950s, the structure was falling into disrepair and areas of it were declared unsafe. The Sunday School had to rent the movie theater across the street to meet in and the office was moved downstairs where the heavy furniture would not be a hazard. The beloved old building would have to be replaced; the question remained whether to rebuild on the same site or find another location.

In the end, it was found that rebuilding on the same site would be more expensive than moving. The new site on Seventeen Mile Drive just outside the gate into Pebble Beach offered space for parking and room to build and grow. A quiet spot in a pine forest and home to a large herd of mule deer, it evoked memories of the original Retreat from so many years ago. Ground was broken in 1962 on Palm Sunday, and on April 7, 1963, again on Palm Sunday, the first worship service was held. Sunday, April 7, 2013 marked the fiftieth anniversary of that first service.

First United Methodist Church has been a beacon of love and of spiritual health and renewal in this community. The contributions and efforts that they have made and will continue to make are invaluable, and I am honored to be able to recognize their achievements.

Mr. Speaker, I know the whole House joins me in heartfelt congratulations on this auspicious day and wishing the congregation good luck in all of their future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SANTA BARBARA SUMMIT FOR TIBET

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the distinguished efforts of the Santa Barbara Summit for Tibet (SBST) in raising awareness about the vibrant culture, deep spirituality, and peaceful philosophy of the Tibetan people. SBST has worked diligently to ensure the Santa Barbara community is engaged on this issue of great importance.

Recent acts of protest in Tibet have served as a disturbing reminder of the suffering that Tibetans continue to endure. We are witnessing the profound struggle of a people that seek to preserve their traditions and religion.

SBST recently held the First Annual "Tibet Week Awareness Celebration" to honor the perseverance and resiliency of the Tibetan people and their culture, and to demonstrate our shared cultural values. This celebration will raise awareness in our community surrounding the struggle faced by Tibetans and promote the universal values of compassion and non-violent practices.

To express my commitment to this issue, I recently joined many of my colleagues in the House of Representatives in sending President Obama a letter, urging him to prioritize addressing human rights issues in Tibet during his second term. Like SBST and the residents of Santa Barbara, I believe the U.S. should take a leading role to engage partner nations on measures to bring improvements in the human rights situation in Tibet.

Today, we stand with the people of Tibet and express our solidarity with them and to all people suffering oppression around the world. As your Representative in Congress, I commend and thank you for your deep commitment to this issue.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. JACQUELIN PERRY

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Dr. Jacquelin Perry, a renowned orthopedic surgeon and physical therapist known for her revolutionary work on treating Polio. Dr. Perry was born on May 31, 1918 in Denver, Colorado and was raised in Los Angeles, California. She attended the University of California, Los Angeles and graduated in 1940 with a bachelor's degree in Physical Education. After earning her degree, she joined the United States Army and trained to be a physical therapist at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. She was then assigned to a hospital in Hot Springs, Arkansas, where many polio patients were being treated.

She continued her education and in 1950, Dr. Perry was one of seven women who received a medical degree from the University of California, San Francisco in a class of seventy-six graduates. When her residency was completed in San Francisco, Dr. Perry was recruited to work at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center. While there, she created a program for patients suffering from polio and other diseases and helped develop the "Halo," a metal ring that screwed into the skull to immobilize a patient's spine and neck that were weakened by polio complications.

From 1972 to the late 1990s, she taught at the University of Southern California's School of Medicine. While there, Perry established a scholarship for the study of the human gait, which she used to research how forward motion is achieved in the legs. During her lifetime, she wrote over four hundred peer-reviewed papers and contributed to numerous scientific publications. Her book, ''Gait Analysis: Normal and Pathological Function,'' published in 1992, has become a standard textbook for orthopedists, physical therapists and other rehabilitation professionals.

Dr. Jacquelin Perry passed away on March 11, 2013, at 94 years of age in her Downey, California home. Although she suffered from Parkinson's disease, it did not deter her from attending work a week before her death. Dr. Perry leaves behind a legacy as an inventive physician, author and teacher. She lived an extraordinary life, and gave her time, her effort and her expertise to the advancement of medicine, and to the struggle to defeat Polio and Post-Polio syndrome. As a survivor of Polio myself, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the life and work of Dr. Jacquelin Perry.

TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 34th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act.

Since the end of World War II, the United States and Taiwan have fostered a close relationship that has been of enormous strategic and economic benefit to both countries. When the United States shifted diplomatic relations from Taiwan to the People's Republic of China in January 1979, Congress moved quickly to pass the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) to ensure that the United States would continue its robust engagement with Taiwan in the areas of commerce, culture, and security cooperation. With President Carter's signature on April 10, 1979, this important and lasting piece of legislation became the law of the land and served as the statutory basis for U.S.-Taiwan relations going forward.

After 34 years, the TRA still stands as a model of congressional leadership in the history of our foreign relations, and, together with the 1982 ''Six Assurances,'' it remains the cornerstone of a very mutually beneficial relationship between the United States and Taiwan. Through three decades marked by momentous social, economic, and political transformations, Taiwan has remained a trusted ally of the United States that now shares with us the ideals of freedom, democracy and self-determination. The foresight of the TRA's drafters in providing that ''the United States will make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services . . . to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability,'' and affirming ''the preservation and enhancement of the human rights of all the people on Taiwan'' as explicit objectives of the United States, has contributed in large measure to make Taiwan what it is today—a vibrant, open society governed by democratic institutions.

Though the people of Taiwan now enjoy fundamental human rights and civil liberties, they continue to live day after day under the ominous shadow cast by over 1400 short- and medium-range ballistic missiles that the People's Republic of China (PRC) has aimed at them. The PRC persists in claiming Taiwan as a 'renegade province,' refusing to renounce the use of force to prevent formal de jure independence, even codifying its right to military action via passage of the so-called ''Anti-Secession Law'' on March 14, 2005. The United States Congress strongly condemned the ''Anti-Secession Law'' in House Concurrent Resolution 98, passed on March 16, 2005.

The TRA affirmed that the United States' decision to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China was based on the expectation that the future of Taiwan would be determined by peaceful means. Furthermore, it stipulates that it is the policy of the United States ''to consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means . . . a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States.'' The unambiguous and principled stance contained in these provisions has been instrumental to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait for more than thirty years, in spite of the growing military threat posed by the PRC.

I therefore invite my colleagues to join me in commemorating the 34th anniversary of the TRA, to further underline our unwavering commitment to the TRA and our support for the strong and deepening relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan.

IN RECOGNITION OF JAMES K. WIGHT'S LEADERSHIP TO THE AMERICAN CONCRETE INSTITUTE

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize James K. Wight, a resident of Michigan, for his volunteer leadership to the American Concrete Institute (ACI) headquartered in Farmington Hills, Michigan, an organization whose work is fundamental to our nation's critical infrastructure, key to our economic competitiveness. As a Member of Congress, I am privileged and honored to recognize Dr. Wight for his leadership and lifelong commitment to this organization and to advancing concrete knowledge in the United States and abroad.

ACI has been the pioneer in all concrete–related fields: research and development, structural design, architectural design, construction, and product manufacture. With 99 chapters, 65 student chapters, and nearly 20,000 members spanning over 120 countries, the American Concrete Institute provides knowledge and information for the best use of concrete. Through a host of activities including continuing education, certification, seminars, publications, and conventions, ACI plays an active and vital role in the concrete industry. Core to ACI is the development of codes and standards, adopted by reference in building codes impacting potentially every concrete project in the United States. Additionally, there are some 21 countries worldwide that base part or all of their national building codes on the ACI 318 Structural Concrete Building Code provisions.

On April 18, 2013, Professor Wight will complete his service as president of ACI, the culmination of 40 years of volunteer service. Wight was named a Fellow of the Institute in 1984 and previously served on the ACI Board of Direction. He is a past Chair of the ACI Technical Activities Committee; ACI Committee 318, Structural Concrete Building Code; and Joint ACI–ASCE Committee 352, Joints and Connections in Monolithic Concrete Structures. He is a Past President of the ACI Greater Michigan Chapter.

ACI has honored him with the Delmar L. Bloem Distinguished Service Award, the Joe W. Kelly Award, the Arthur J. Boase Award, the Alfred E. Lindau Award, the Chester Paul Siess Award for Excellence in Structural Research, and the Wason Medal for the Most Meritorious Paper in 2011. He has also received the Arthur Y. Moy Award from the ACI Greater Michigan Chapter for outstanding service in the field of concrete technology.

Also of note, James K. Wight, who received his undergraduate education at Michigan State University, is the F.E. Richart Jr. Collegiate Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich. He has been a professor in the structural engineering area of the civil and environmental engineering department since September 1973, where he teaches undergraduate and graduate classes on structural analysis and design of concrete structures. Wight is known for his work in earthquake–resistant design of concrete structures. His more recent research has concentrated on the strength and inelastic behavior of connections in composite structures (reinforced concrete and steel) and the use of high–performance fiber–reinforced concrete composites for earthquake–resistant design of critical members in concrete structures. He has been involved with post–earthquake damage studies following earthquakes in Mexico, Chile, Armenia, Egypt, California, Japan, and India.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor Dr. James Wight's leadership and service to the American Concrete Institute.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. LOUIS C. DEBERGALIS

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Louis C. DeBergalis, who passed away on Saturday, February 2, 2013 at the age of 69.

A proud member of Ironworkers Local 6 who shared a family–owned small business, Mr. DeBergalis exemplified the American Dream. Along with his brother, Rocco Jr., he co–owned Rod Placing, a steel reinforcing company started by his father, Rocco.

Mr. DeBergalis was a family man. In addition to his role and pride in the family business, he loved his wife, Christine; daughters, Tonya Balash and Jacquelyn Criola; son, Jeffrey; mother, Olympia; sister, Mary Rose Gaughan; and three brothers Joseph, Paul, and Rocco Jr.

Mr. DeBergalis lived most of his life in Buffalo's Lovejoy neighborhood. He took pride in his heritage and community, holding membership in the Big Timers Italian–American Club. In his down time, he enjoyed a variety of activities including gardening, cooking, and stone carving.

Mr. Speaker, I kindly ask you to join me and our colleagues as we stand in this moment to honor the life of Mr. Louis C. DeBergalis and offer our deepest condolences to his family.

EQUAL PAY DAY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, women played a tremendous role in the 2012 elections—including fighting for equal pay. Today, we commemorate Equal Pay Day, the time typically three months into the new year that it takes for women's wages to catch up to what men were paid in the previous year. This is an annual reminder that the wallets of America's women are not as heavy as they should be because women face pay discrimination. Even when accounting for education, industry, and hours worked there remains a wage gap.

Women's lifetime earnings will never recover from the persistent reduction in wages they receive relative to their male counterparts. Nationwide, women make 77 cents for every dollar earned by a man. While these sound like pennies, in fact they add up to a yearly gap of $11,084 between full-time working men and women. This decrease in take home pay affects not just women but also their families.

In New York City, which I'm proud to represent, women who work full time are paid 85 cents for every dollar paid to men who work full time, adding up to a yearly gap of $8,429. As a result, New York City's women collectively lose more than $23 million a year because of the wage gap. This is simply unacceptable for working women and their families in New York and nationwide.

In the 111th Congress, I was proud to serve as the first female Chair of the Joint Economic Committee. At the end of my tenure I issued the report, ''Invest in Women, Invest in America: A Comprehensive Review of Women in the U.S. Economy.'' This comprehensive report included research done by the Committee, testimony from several hearings, and GAO reports assessing the detrimental gender wage gap for part-time workers and older Americans as well as wider discussions of women's continued under-representation in management level positions. As I said in that report, ''The decisions we make today will have dramatic impacts on our nation's future economic well-being, and we must carefully consider what those decisions will mean for women, both as consumers and as producers.''

There is a remedy to this persistent problem of unequal pay. I have consistently supported the Paycheck Fairness Act, commonsense legislation that gives women the tools to fight wage discrimination and provides stronger workplace protections for working women. This Congress must stand up for working families and provide for the basic rights and fairness of 51 percent of the U.S. population.

34TH ANNIVERSARY OF TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, for sixty years the United States and Taiwan have fostered a close relationship that has been of mutual political, economic, cultural and strategic benefit. When the United States shifted diplomatic relations from the Republic of China (Taiwan) to the People's Republic of China in January 1979, Congress moved quickly to pass the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) to ensure that the United States would have continued commercial and cultural relations with Taiwan. This year marks the 34th anniversary of the TRA.

This important piece of legislation codified the basis for relations between the U.S. and Taiwan and has been instrumental in maintaining peace, security and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

Today, Taiwan is one of the leading U.S trading partners and, in my district, accounts for the second-largest percentage of cargo activity at the Port of Long Beach.

It is my hope that the United States and Taiwan will continue to work together to promote enduring peace, stability, and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

HONORING MS. LANA FELTON-GHEE

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Lana Felton-Ghee, a constituent of Pennsylvania's 1st District, for her 66th birthday.

Born, raised and educated in Philadelphia, Lana is well known for her successes in business and politics. Graduating from Temple University, Ms. Felton-Ghee led a longtime, high profile career in marketing and public relations. She established her own business in 1995, Lana Felton-Ghee Associates, Inc., and took on challenging projects in our area and throughout the country. Her expertise was recognized nationally, and she became a key consultant on campaigns for figures such as Mayor Ed Rendell and President Bill Clinton.

Throughout her busy and successful career, Ms. Felton-Ghee also made time for a fulfilling family life and is a proud mother of four and grandmother of ten.

I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues help me in honoring Ms. Felton-Ghee and her birthday. Ms. Felton-Ghee is the epitome of a life-long Philadelphian and a model citizen. We can all learn something from her fortitude and her commitment to her career, her city and her family. She has been known to say that ''there is no place like Philadelphia,'' but Philadelphia would not be nearly as bright a place without her vibrant and dedicated personality.

CONTRACT SCREENER REFORM AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the ''Contract Screener Reform and Accountability Act.''

Together with my colleagues in the House, Representative NITA LOWEY of New York and CEDRIC RICHMOND of Louisiana, I am introducing this legislation to reform, enhance oversight of, and provide greater workforce protections to the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) contract screener program known as the Screening Partnership Program (SPP). I am very pleased that a companion measure is being introduced in the other chamber by Senator SHERROD BROWN of Ohio.

Specifically, the ''Contract Screener Reform and Accountability Act'' would:

Bar subsidiaries of foreign owned corporations from providing for security screening at domestic airports under the SPP;

Mandate covert testing of contract screeners so that their performance can be monitored and compared to airports where screening is carried out by TSA and protect the integrity of those tests by imposing penalties for compromising such testing;

Require security breaches at airports with contracted screening services to be reported;

Ensure national security through requiring training for the proper handling of sensitive security information at SPP airports;

Provide new compensation, benefits, and whistleblower protections for screeners; and

Enhance customer service for the flying public who are screened at SPP airports.

With enactment of the ''FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012'' (P.L. 112–95), subsidiaries of foreign owned corporations are permitted, for the first time since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, to provide screening services at our nation's commercial service airports. This change in law was enacted without debate about the security implications and despite the need, in the current economic climate, to encourage opportunities for U.S. companies rather than outsourcing work and diverting taxpayer dollars to subsidiaries of foreign owned corporations.

The reforms concerning covert testing are necessary in light of the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General's previous finding that the contractor for screening services at San Francisco International Airport (SFO), the nation's largest and busiest airport with contract screeners, compromised covert testing.

It is imperative that the integrity of covert security testing be protected so that we are assured that contract screeners perform at the same level as Transportation Security Officers.

TSA has reported numerous security breaches occurring regularly at airports with contract screeners, including at SFO. These breaches include contract screener personnel not detecting prohibited items such as knives and bullets in carry-on baggage, improperly clearing passengers without verification of their identity, and not conducting the required additional screening of passengers referred to secondary screening.

For example, on August 21, 2009, a passenger at SFO alarmed the walk-through

metal detector and was referred to the secondary area for additional screening. The passenger promptly let herself out of the holding area and collected her accessible property. It was three minutes before an employee of the private screening company noticed that she was missing.

More needs to be done to prevent security breaches at SPP airports.

Similarly, given that the documented mishandling of sensitive information can have tragic consequences, more needs to be done to prevent such violations as well.

Today, TSA does not have a process in place for ensuring that all employees of corporations with contracts for screening services receive training on the proper handling of sensitive information.

This is the case despite several instances of sensitive security information having been mishandled by employees of corporations with contracts for screening services under the SPP.

For example, on July 18, 2010, a new hire training manual containing sensitive security information (SSI) about screening practices was stolen after a private security company employee in possession of the manual removed it from SFO. In response, TSA sent a letter to the company that conducts screening services for SFO, as well as to all other SPP contractors, directing that any SSI materials be retained in a secure fashion at the airport and only removed with expressed, written permission of a TSA Contracting Officer.

I understand that similar incidents have occurred at other SPP airports. However, since TSA has not always taken action or documented their actions to correct the mishandling of the SSI information, reports on such incidents are currently unavailable.

Regarding workforce protections, the bill would protect workers' pay and benefits by requiring that when an airport privatizes, the private screening company provide Transportation Security Officers employed at the time of the switch the right of first refusal to screening jobs and offer compensation and benefits equal to or greater than what they received at the time the contract was awarded.

No worker on the front lines in securing our aviation system should lose their job, see a reduction in pay, or lose benefits because an airport opts to utilize a private screening company.

As all of my colleagues can attest to, customer service at airports, and in particular in the security screening lanes, is an issue that evokes passionate reactions from constituents all across the country.

Currently, there is no requirement that private screening companies report customer complaints regarding their screening experience to TSA or Congress. The bill would provide the public an avenue for expressing concerns with screening at airports with contract screeners, thus ensuring that the flying public's concerns can be addressed.

In the wake of the deadly attacks of September 11, 2001, TSA was created to secure all modes of transportation so that a terrorist attack on the scale of 9/11 would never happen again.

Since TSA's earliest days, it has struggled to fulfill its mission, but, with every passing year, it matures and improves as a security agency. Opponents of TSA have not forgone any opportunity to exploit a misstep to advance their ultimate goal—the dismantling of TSA. At the same time, they have willfully turned a blind eye to lapses, breaches, and problems at airports secured by contract screeners.

Just as we must act to strengthen TSA's security operations, it is imperative that we address SPP's glaring security challenges.

It is my hope that the "Contract Screener Reform and Accountability Act" be enacted to ensure that we do just that.

HONORING THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF ARTHUR EVE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the former Deputy Speaker of the New York State Assembly, and my former colleague, Arthur O. Eve, on the occasion of his 80th birthday. A Korean war veteran, factory worker, national political activist, and tireless advocate for all those forced to occupy the margins of society, Art's selfless public service inspires me to this day.

Born in New York City and raised in Florida during segregation, Art arrived in Buffalo in February 1953. Having just earned his Bachelor's of Science from West Virginia State College, he enlisted in the United State Army. Art honorably served our country, fighting in the Korean War from 1953 to 1955. While serving his tour of duty in Germany, he managed a program for orphans, foreshadowing his legacy of advocacy for children, the elderly, the homeless, the poor, and all others who suffer discrimination.

In 1955, Art completed his service and returned to Buffalo, securing a job at a local Chevrolet plant. It was there he first observed the desperate plight Buffalo's youth. Due to a complete absence of role models and guidance, young people often succumbed to drugs and other criminal activities. A former All–High basketball player in Florida and an All–European player in Germany, Art intimately understood the immeasurable benefits of role models and organized activities in children's lives.

Art became inspired to quit his job at Chevrolet to seek a position in parks and recreation. He found civil service jobs, the foundation of our city, were rarely awarded based on merit. Determined to transform the system from within, Art joined the local Democratic Party and soon earned his position in the Parks Department.

A true reformer, Art was the sole ward leader who remained separate from the political establishment by 1958. He became known for his courageous independent activism and civil rights advocacy, which led to his election to the New York State Assembly in 1966.

Art dedicated his extraordinary tenure in the Assembly to representing those who others ignored. During his first term, he pioneered efforts to secure $500,000 to begin the State University of New York system's SEEK/Educational Opportunity Program. The program provides financially disadvantaged students with academic support and supplemental funding to facilitate their pursuit of higher education. As of 2013, the program had $3.5 million worth of funding.

Art's reputation as a champion of equality spread. Ahead of his time, Art supported many issues that remain relevant today, including legislation in favor of expanded access to healthcare and against hate crimes. By the 1970s, colleges in New York had established the Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program to aid students without scholastic or financial resources. In 1988, the Kennedy Center recognized Art's legacy with their prestigious Distinguished Leadership in Arts and Education Award.

In 1979, Art became Deputy Speaker of the New York State Assembly. His tireless work towards equality and human rights brought national attention to the New York State Assembly. As Deputy Speaker, he was the highest ranking African American in the New York State Legislature. He was a founding member of the New York State Black and Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus, and served on the committee of public officials who attempted to quell the conflict at Attica State Prison. He remained Deputy Speaker until his retirement from the State Assembly in 2002.

Art's rise to political prominence demonstrated great strides for the African–American community. In Buffalo, Art became the first African American to win the Buffalo Mayoral Democratic Primary. During his campaign, he led a historic voter registration drive, registering thousands of new African–American voters. Nationally, Art served as an adviser to Jesse Jackson's 1984 presidential campaign.

I feel highly privileged to have served with Art in the State Assembly from 1999 to 2002. During my time there, I valued Art's advice and counsel. As a new legislator in Albany, I treasured the wisdom and companionship of my colleague and fellow advocate for Western New York. To this day, I feel extremely fortunate to have shared time in the New York State Legislature with Art.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to celebrate Arthur Eve's extraordinary work in honor of his 80th birthday. I am profoundly grateful for his service and friendship, and continue to be inspired by his incredible legacy.

IN OBSERVANCE OF HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember those who perished during the Holocaust and to honor those who survived.

This week, when the world observes Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, we recall the 6 million who died at the hands of the Nazis. We remember their stories—as sons, daughters, mothers, fathers. Whole communities have been lost.

This week, Congress will assemble for a memorial service for the Days of Remembrance to pay our respects to the victims of the Holocaust.

In Washington, DC, Yom Hashoah is commemorated as part of the Days of Remembrance sponsored by U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. The theme of this year's event is "Never Again: Heeding the Warning Signs." The theme raises questions:

When faced with opportunities to stop the Nazis, why did we miss the warning signs? How could we have failed to act? These questions speak to us today about our responsibility to act—even when others don't.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust. This year, they convened an intergenerational walk with Holocaust survivors to bring awareness to the community. Pan Pacific Park was transformed into a timeline of the events of the Holocaust so that participants could learn more about the deep tragedy of Nazi atrocities. This event also shows survivors that they are not alone. They have a community around them to support them.

It is my honor to represent the Los Angeles area, which is home to approximately 10,000 survivors. This week—and every week—we honor their courage and their strength. At a time when fewer and fewer survivors are alive to tell their stories, we must all bear witness to their tremendous legacy.

RECOGNIZING THE 27TH ANNUAL NATIONAL ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, April marks the 27th annual National Alcohol Awareness Month.

As co-chair of the House Addiction, Treatment and Recovery (ATR) caucus, I rise today to talk about the importance of this milestone and to applaud the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD), which since 1987 has sponsored Alcohol Awareness Month to increase public awareness and understanding, reduce stigma and encourage local communities to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues.

Alcohol abuse is one of the leading causes of death in this country and is a huge contributor to other pressing health care problems like hypertension, high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke. Not a day goes by that we as a Caucus don't hear another story about the tragedy wrought by the abuse of alcohol. Some have even gone so far as to call the abuse of alcohol and other drugs the number one public health crisis facing this country.

This year, National Alcohol Awareness Month is highlighting the important public health issue of underage drinking, a problem with devastating individual, family and community consequences. With this year's theme, ''Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow,'' the month of April will be filled with local, state, and national events aimed at educating people about the treatment and prevention of alcoholism. Local NCADD Affiliates as well as schools, colleges, churches, and countless other community organizations will sponsor activities that create awareness and encourage individuals and families to get help for alcohol-related problems.

Alcohol use by young people is extremely dangerous—both to themselves and to society, and is directly associated with traffic fatalities, violence, suicide, educational failure, alcohol overdose, unsafe sex and other problem behaviors. Annually, over 6,500 people under the age of 21 die from alcohol-related injuries.

Additionally:

Alcohol is the number one drug of choice for America's young people, and is more likely to kill young people than all illegal drugs combined.

Each day, 7,000 kids in the United States under the age of 16 take their first drink.

More than 1,700 college students in the U.S. are killed each year—about 4.65 a day—as a result of alcohol-related injuries.

25% of U.S. children are exposed to alcohol-use disorders in their family. Underage alcohol use costs the nation an estimated $62 billion annually.

And yet, these statistics don't fully convey the danger of underage drinking. The more we learn about the human brain, the more we learn how dangerous early drinking is for underage drinkers.

Reducing underage drinking is critical to securing a healthy future for America's youth and requires a cooperative effort from parents, schools, community organizations, business leaders, government agencies, the entertainment industry and alcohol manufacturers/retailers. Underage drinking is a complex issue, one that can only be solved through a sustained and cooperative effort. As a nation, we need to wake up to the reality that for some, alcoholism and addiction develop at a young age and that prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery support are essential for them and their families. We can't afford to wait any longer.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to highlight this important issue with a National Alcohol Awareness Month event in their districts. This is a problem that plagues all of our communities but working together, we can restore hope to our young people and their families.

GEORGIA NATIONAL GUARD WINS TOP ACOE AWARD

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the Georgia National Guard on being selected as the winner of the National Guard Special Category in the 2013 Army Communities of Excellence (ACOE) awards competition.

It is a source of pride to see Georgia's own National Guard recognized for excellence. These servicemen and women have gone above and beyond the call of duty to earn this prestigious award.

The yearly ACOE competition reviews leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, and performance criteria to rank installations on their overall Army readiness and quality management. The U.S. Army chief of staff chooses National Guard installations that best exemplify these qualities.

As this year's deserving winner, the Georgia National Guard's prize will include funding towards installation upgrades that will improve facilities, and boost morale of soldiers, retirees, and civilians serving there.

Mr. Speaker, this is a momentous occasion for the State of Georgia, and it is with sincere gratitude that I would like to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to the Georgia National Guard for the sacrifice and hard work that ensures America's safety and won them this esteemed award.

HONORING FRANCIS B. GIBBS

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements and the unwavering commitment to public service of Francis B. Gibbs.

It seems like yesterday that Francis came to Washington to work for his hometown congressman, Ander Crenshaw. He went on to be a trusted aide and friend to U.S. Rep. Connie Mack. Francis spent over five years by Congressman Mack's side, and his fingerprints could be found on legislative matters concerning government expansion, protection of our Constitution and the principles of federalism.

Francis is a man rooted in principle. From his work on the Patriot Act to defending freedom for people in Venezuela and around the Western Hemisphere, Francis served as a tireless advocate for making this government a ''more perfect Union'' by protecting people's individual rights and liberty.

After his son Couper was born, Francis and his wife LeAnne—who worked for Congressman Mike Pence—decided to leave Washington to raise their new family in the Sunshine State. Francis took his drive and passion back to the Florida Department of Transportation, where he serves as the chief of staff, leveraging his experience in Washington with his knack for building consensus to get the right things done for the right reasons.

Mr. Speaker, we know all too well that the political arena can be viewed as a cold and cynical process. Francis's approach has always been different. He builds bridges and more importantly, he creates enduring friendships that remind us that there is a way to serve honorably.

Francis is now facing a fight with colon cancer. He has fought this with the same tenacity he exuded during his congressional days when he battled legislative threats to the Constitution—with passion and grace.

LeAnne, has been a constant source of strength, compassion and grace. Ernest Hemingway had somebody like LeAnne in mind when he wrote ''courage is grace under fire.'' Their anchors are two beautiful children, Couper and Riley.

Francis has a long-term view of what America can and should be. He believes that ultimately America promises a better life for the next generation. He embodies everything that this promise stands for, and his children will live out this American Dream that their dad shaped. Over the years, legislative achievements are forgotten by the public and often become footnotes in a textbook. However, the difference that Francis made—the issues he worked on—will carry on. More importantly, the way he treated people will not be forgotten by those of us fortunate enough to spend time in these hallowed halls.

Mr. Speaker, let us today celebrate Francis Gibbs, honor his wife LeAnne, and tell his children that America will be a better place for them because of the work, love and devotion of their parents.

HONORING PATAGONIA FOUNDER YVON CHOUINARD, RECIPIENT OF THE LOS PADRES FOREST WATCH WILDERNESS LEGACY AWARD

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I congratulate Yvon Chouinard, the 2013 recipient of the Los Padres Forest Watch Wilderness Legacy Award.

Mr. Chouinard started out as a self-taught blacksmith, selling aluminum pitons for mountain climbing out of the trunk of his car. The only pitons available at that time were made of soft iron, placed once, and then left in the rock to rust. In Yosemite, multiday ascents requiring hundreds of placements had left these once-smooth majestic surfaces scarred and pocked. Aluminum pitons revolutionized the sport, preventing further damage and preserving awe-inspiring peaks across the United States. This past year, the company Mr. Chouinard founded, Patagonia, Inc., grossed $414 million dollars in sales.

As his business expanded to outdoor gear and clothing, Mr. Chouinard has brought these same ethical principles to bear by using recycled and organic materials and adapting energy efficient production methods. Every year, Patagonia pledges 1% of its yearly sales to further conservation work across the globe. Patagonia's tireless commitment has proven that in business the planet does not need to be sacrificed for profit.

Patagonia is an invaluable partner in the Ventura County community, working with local organizations like Los Padres Forest Watch to protect California's wild places. Shortly after Los Padres Forest Watch held its first board meeting in 2004, they received a grant from Patagonia. Since that time, Patagonia has generously given grants to support their important local forest protection work, as well as volunteering their employees, donating their products, and organizing fundraising events like the annual 5k Salmon Run. Yvon Chouinard and Patagonia have had a positive and lasting influence on the preservation of the Los Padres National Forest.

I am pleased to join Los Padres Forest Watch in honoring Mr. Chouinard for his legacy of environmental activism and ensuring Patagonia is an exemplary model of environmental corporate stewardship.

JOHN PATRICK FISCHBACH

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud John Patrick Fischbach for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. John Patrick Fischbach is a 12th grader at Ralston Valley High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by John Patrick Fischbach is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to John Patrick Fischbach for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING THE 34TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today, on the 34th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, I want to take a moment to recognize this landmark legislation, the special relationship that exists between the United States and Taiwan, and the exceptional work by this Congress to reinforce the bond between our peoples. Yesterday also marked another important date in U.S. Taiwan relations: the 11th anniversary of the founding of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus. Since April 9, 2002, the Taiwan Caucus has grown into one of the most prominent caucuses in Congress with almost 140 current members, and has led the way in strengthening diplomatic, security, and economic relations between our two nations.

Since this Congress came together 34 years ago to pass the Taiwan Relations Act, the legislation has constituted the cornerstone of our unique relationship with one of the world's most vibrant democracies. For 30 years, the United States recognized the Republic of China (Taiwan) as the legitimate representative of the Chinese people. Yet, in 1979, the Carter administration switched sides and recognized the People's Republic of China, and at the same time derecognized the Republic of China (Taiwan). In an effort to counter this act of injustice, a unified United States Congress came together to pass the Taiwan Relations Act. To this day, our great nations continue to prosper through mutually beneficial trade relations, shared security interests, and the policies codified by the Taiwan Relations Act.

Mr. Speaker, while recognizing the accomplishments of the Taiwan Relations Act, we must also recognize the need to strengthen our commitment to Taiwan through expanded diplomatic, security, and trade ties. Earlier this year, I was proud to introduce, with my colleagues, the co-chairs of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, Representatives MARIO DIAZ-BALART, JOHN CARTER, ALBIO SIRES, GERALD CONNOLLY, the Taiwan Policy Act, which seeks to accomplish these goals. If enacted, our proposed legislation would permit Taiwan's leaders to meet with U.S. officials in all executive branches, authorize the transfer of decommissioned Perry class guided missile frigates, and support the sale of F16 C/D fighter jets to the Armed Forces of Taiwan. With the growing antagonism of North Korea and the ever expanding territorial ambitions of China, our alliance with the democratic nation of Taiwan is even more important.

In 2012, as our 11th largest trading partner, 16th largest export market, and 11th largest import market, Taiwan and the United States shared in $63.2 billion in total trade. It is clear that Taiwan is already a close and valuable trade partner for the United States but there is more work to be done. We are glad that TIFA talks were resumed and that the most recent round was concluded in a satisfying fashion. As a next step, our U.S. Trade Representative should begin negotiations on a Bilateral Investment Agreement. A free trade agreement with Taiwan should be our ultimate goal and it is my hope that we can begin negotiations in the near future. The United States should also support Taiwan receiving observer status in the International Civil Aviation Organization.

We, as a nation, are fortunate to have Taiwan as an ally, friend, and one of our largest trading partners. Taiwan is a nation we truly can depend upon; a people who share the same dreams and aspirations as we do here in the United States. Today, we remember our predecessors here in the United States Congress who created the Taiwan Relations Act, as well as the founding members of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, who have helped the relationship between our two nations blossom into an enduring partnership.

RECOGNIZING KEVIN KRIGGER

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, when the horses line up in Churchill Downs for the running of the Kentucky Derby next month, all eyes in my district, the U.S. Virgin Islands, will be on young Kevin Krigger, a jockey from my home island of St. Croix, who will be riding the horse Goldencents.

We are all proud of Kevin, who grew up in LaVallee and attended Central High School. According to Kevin, he has always wanted to be a jockey and grew up in the sport, riding horses on the beaches and country roads of the island and challenging anyone he could to a race. Before he was recruited by other Virgin Islands born jockeys who race in the States to join their ranks, he was well known on the tracks of St. Croix, St. Thomas and Tortola as a talent to watch. He proved himself riding on the West Coast, in particular at Emerald Downs in Seattle, Washington before his historic win on Saturday at the Santa Anita Derby.

With Saturday's win, Kevin Krigger has become the first African American to win the Santa Anita Derby. Last fall, he was the first African American jockey to win a million dollar race in Louisiana's Delta Jackpot. If he rides Goldencents to victory in the Kentucky Derby next month, he will become the first African American to do so since 1902. Goldencents is co-owned by the stable of Louisville basketball coach Rick Pitino and is trained by Doug O'Neill.

Mr. Speaker, Kevin Krigger's family and fans in the U.S. Virgin Islands will be cheering wildly on the first Saturday in May. I congratulate his mother Averil Simmonds and father Albert Krigger, Jr. We are all proud of this young man and his accomplishments and wish him Godspeed in this and all of his future endeavors.

HONORING INVESTIGATOR FRANCESCO Z. MCBRIDE

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Investigator Francesco Z. McBride, a constituent of my district, who has been chosen to receive the distinguished honor of the Amtrak Police Department's Officer of the Year for 2012 for his numerous and significant contributions to the department.

A resident of Sharon Hill, Investigator McBride joined the Amtrak Police Department (APD) in 2001 initially as an Officer, and is now an Investigator in Amtrak's Mid-Atlantic Division. He is a member of the APD Pipe and Drum Unit.

Investigator McBride's exemplary service has resulted in arrests in cases that have a combined monetary value of approximately $325,000. These cases include copper wire theft in Baltimore that has resulted in damage and serious disruptions to train operations; recovering Amtrak-owned tools and equipment from burglar's barn; and tracking down the culprits of the theft of copper materials in Philadelphia. These are just a few examples of Investigator McBride's invaluable work that has earned him the distinction of Amtrak Police Officer of the Year.

I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues help me in honoring the Officer of the Year, Investigator McBride, for his admirable work with Amtrak.

COMMENDING THE ANTHONY TELESCA FOUNDATION

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Anthony Telesca Foundation for selflessly working to improve the safety of communities in Florida by promoting safe driving habits to Florida's teenagers. The organization helps to educate and encourage teenagers to drive safely by hosting safety awareness functions with local high schools and law enforcement officials.

In December 2002, 16-year-old Anthony Joseph Telesca passed away as the result of a reckless driving incident. As a result of this unfortunate and tragic incident, the Anthony Telesca Foundation was created to work with local high school and law enforcement officials to increase driver safety awareness among teenagers. The Foundation also provides scholarships and philanthropic support in order to meet its mission of preventing reckless teenage driving and driving accidents, injuries, and fatalities.

Among other activities, the Foundation has hosted events with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office and high schools in northern Pinellas County, Florida, which I represent, to reward teenagers who have been observed practicing safe driving habits. Educating and rewarding teenagers to drive safe has helped to prevent needless motor accidents from occurring.

Mr. Speaker, in the decade since the unfortunate passing of Anthony Telesca, the foundation that was established in his honor has represented the best of the human spirit, and the organization has become a shining example of how to turn an unfortunate tragedy into something meaningful. The Anthony Telesca Foundation's humanitarian efforts and successes exemplify the strength and compassion within people, and I commend them for their contributions.

JOEY ROOT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Joey Root for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Joey Root is a 12th grader at Warren Tech North and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Joey Root is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Joey Root for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote No. 90 "to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to facilitate the development of hydroelectric power on the Diamond Fork System of the Central Utah Project" (H.R. 254). Had I been present, I would have voted "yes".

RESOLUTION ON APRIL AS PARKINSON'S DISEASE MONTH

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, along with my fellow co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus on Parkinson's Disease, Reps. Peter King and Chris Van Hollen, today I am introducing a resolution designating April as Parkinson's Awareness Month. As co-chairs of the Caucus we have worked to bring attention to the second most common neurological disease in the United States. This chronic, progressive neurological disease debilitates those living with Parkinson's and affects their families, as well. In the U.S. there are an estimated 500,000 to 1.5 million people with Parkinson's disease, with some predictions showing the prevalence will more than double by 2040.

Currently, there is no therapy or drug to slow its progression and a cure has yet to be found. This resolution supports continued education and research to find more effective treatments and eventually a cure. It also applauds the dedicated organizations, volunteers, medical researchers, and millions of Americans working to improve the quality of life of persons living with Parkinson's disease and their families.

As the loved one of someone afflicted by Parkinson's disease, I witnessed personally the effect of Parkinson's disease on my father. As a result, I know firsthand that we must provide support to the loved ones, caregivers and researchers attempting to improve the welfare of those living with Parkinson's. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

HONORING TAIWAN

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). On April 10th, the United States and the Republic of China, more commonly referred to as Taiwan, will celebrate the 34th anniversary of the TRA, which is the premier law that governs U.S.-Taiwan bilateral relations. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter signed the TRA into law and since that time it has been the cornerstone to maintaining peace, security, and stability in the Western Pacific. The TRA has held up well for over 34 years and is an important reminder of the strong alliance between our two sides.

All facets of the U.S.-Taiwan bilateral relationship—cultural, economic, and strategic—have expanded and grown stronger since the signing into law of the TRA. Taiwan is the United States' 10th largest trading partner. Taiwan is the seventh largest export market for U.S. agriculture. Since 1998, Taiwan has purchased over $5.5 billion dollars in corn and $4 billion in soybeans from the United States. For my home state of Indiana, Taiwan is one of its top export markets in Asia. Recently, Taiwan signed a multi-million dollar agreement with the State of Indiana for the purchase of corn and soybeans for the years 2012 and 2013. Without a doubt, Hoosier farmers and my state's economy have benefitted greatly from trade agreements with Taiwan.

As a new member of the House Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific and the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, I have had the pleasure to meet with Ambassador Pu-tsung King, Taiwan's Representative serving in Washington, DC. We discussed the unique circumstances that define our two countries' relations. I look forward to working with Ambassador King on additional initiatives that could benefit the people of Indiana and Taiwan.

I was pleased to learn from Ambassador King of the many steps Taiwan has taken to reduce tensions with China, their neighbors along the Taiwan Strait. Although Taiwan and

China split amid civil war in 1949, bilateral relations between the two are at an all-time high. Today, China is Taiwan's largest trading partner. Starting in 2008, Taiwan and China signed an agreement to improve direct links between the two countries. This agreement has been a resounding success eliminating barriers to air and sea travel between the two sides. As a result, there are about 600 direct passenger flights that operate each week between Taiwan and China. Cargo ships now transit directly between the two sides. Building upon the successes of the 2008 agreement, in 2010, Taiwan and China signed a landmark trade agreement called the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement, which reduced tariffs and commercial barriers between the two sides. The people of China and Taiwan are more connected today than ever before.

Like many of my colleagues in the House, I believe that a strong Taiwan is vital for maintaining stability in the region. Like Congressman ROYCE, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I, too, support the sale of newer, diesel submarines and F–16s upgrades to Taiwan's government, which will serve to protect U.S. national interests in the region. I intend to work closely with my Congressional colleagues to encourage the Administration to expedite the U.S. sale of needed military hardware to Taiwan's government.

Simply put, a strong, prosperous Taiwan serves both our nations' interests. I am certainly thankful to my predecessors who passed the Taiwan Relations Act, which remains the hallmark of the U.S.-Taiwan alliance.

JESUS LOZANO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jesus Lozano for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jesus Lozano is an 11th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jesus Lozano is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jesus Lozano for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING SERVICE OF GLEN DOHERTY, VICTIM OF THE ATTACK ON THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BENGHAZI

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of Mr. Glen Doherty, who was tragically killed on September 11, 2012 at the age of 42 in the armed assault against the U.S. diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya. I commend Mr. Doherty's career and offer my sincerest thanks for his dedicated service in protecting our nation.

A desire to push himself and to use his talents to make genuine change in the world led Glen to join the Navy SEALs in 1995, where he served as a paramedic and sniper in the Middle East. Among other missions, his team responded to the terrorist attack on the *USS Cole* in 2000. Following knee reconstruction in 2001, Glen had planned on leaving the military but when our nation was attacked on September 11th, Glen decided to remain with the SEALs.

Mr. Doherty twice deployed in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. On his first tour, he joined the earliest Marine contingents on their march to Baghdad. He was taken from his unit for sniper duty for several days, but returned to them before they took Baghdad and continued with them to take Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit as well. Glen believed that the possibility of liberating a troubled country from a tyrant and making democracy possible for the Iraqi people was something worth risking his life.

In 2005, Glen left the SEALs, but remained focused on the Middle East as a private security contractor. He worked for peace and security in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Lebanon, and other high threat areas in the region.

I again offer Mr. Doherty my sincerest thanks and hope that his family and those who knew him best can find comfort in the outstanding service he gave his nation, as well as the passion and conviction that drove him into a career and life of defending others.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues please join me in recognizing the distinguished career of Glen Doherty and his selfless sacrifice to a grateful nation.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 1287

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H.R.1287, the Sound Science Act of 2013. Congressman STEPHEN FINCHER and I introduced this bill on March 20, 2013 to ensure the highest level of Scientific Integrity at our federal agencies.

Our bill is a sensible approach requiring federal agencies to develop scientific integrity policies that adhere to the scientific method, therefore maximizing the quality and integrity of science used in the regulatory decision-making process.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a continuation of the efforts the Administration has put forth on the issue of scientific integrity. In March of 2009, President Obama issued a Presidential memorandum directing the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to require federal departments and agencies to develop procedures ''for restoring scientific integrity to government decision making.''

At the beginning of last year, the President continued this work by issuing Executive Order 13563, ''Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review,'' which stated that each agency ''shall ensure the objectivity of any scientific and technological information and processes used to support the agency's regulatory actions.''

Since that process began, departments and agencies have developed their own policies to address the President's concerns. Unfortunately, not all agencies have made an equal commitment to scientific integrity.

In fact, earlier this month, the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), released a report on the status of such policies—now four years after this process started. Unfortunately, a variety of Departments and agencies have received an unfavorable review from UCS, including the Department of Energy, Health and Human Services, and the USDA to name a few. UCS notes that these departments have developed ''policies that do not make adequate commitments to scientific integrity.''

This bill attempts to address some of the inadequacies highlighted by UCS and builds on the Administration's initiative by codifying the requirement that the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy compel each federal agency to develop guidelines regarding the scientific information used by federal agencies.

Additionally, this legislation clarifies that scientific information be supported by peer review when appropriate; ensures that scientific studies used in making decisions be disclosed to the public, and requires an opportunity for stakeholder input.

It also requires federal agencies to give greatest weight to information based on reproducible data that is developed in accordance with the scientific method.

Finally, the bill establishes any regulatory action in violation of an agency's internal scientific integrity guidelines be deemed arbitrary and subject to challenge by affected stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill to ensure that government decisions are fact-based and made in sound science.

HONORING ARMY CORPORAL WILLIAM L. MCMILLAN III

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, nearly five years ago Army Corporal William L. McMillan III gave the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and was only 22 years of age when he gave his life for this country.

There is nothing as noble as the character of a man who so willingly dedicates his life for others. The American warriors serving our military, and their families, understand that better than anybody. They embody what it means to be an American.

William McMillan gave his life on June 8, 2008 in Baghdad when his patrol was struck by an improvised explosive device. CPL McMillan is survived by his wife, Elizabeth; his parents, Marge and Lloyd McMillan; his brother Brad, sister Laura Buchanan and husband Rob, niece Paige, and nephew Chance.

William grew up in Lexington, Kentucky, and was always going to be a military man like his father, who graduated from West Point and served in Vietnam. He was a star athlete at Hargrave Military Academy in Virginia, where he was captain of the football, wrestling, and lacrosse teams. He attended Virginia Military Institute for one year before enlisting in the Army. William was serving his first tour of duty in Iraq, and his awards include the Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Purple Heart, Combat Action Badge, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, and the Weapons Qualifications Badge of Expert.

We grieve the loss of this American warrior, but we celebrate and honor his life and his service. William stood for the best of the American ideals and values exemplified in our fighting infantrymen. He served this Nation as the fine soldier he always wanted to be. He fought for liberty for a people he did not know in a land where he had never been.

As a U.S. Congressman, I am forever grateful for William McMillan's service to our country and am both humbled and honored by the sacrifice he made for the price of our freedom. Because of his bravery and that of his fellow men and women in uniform, our American freedoms are protected for future generations. Truly, he is a hero to us all.

LOGAN BANNER 125 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of a local newspaper in the heart of the coalfields of southern West Virginia. This year, the Logan Banner celebrates 125 years of excellence in journalism and service to the greater Logan County area and beyond.

For a century and a quarter, the Logan Banner has made banner headlines out of local and regional news stories that inform its readers on matters most important to them, what is happening in their own backyards.

In a world awash in news and information services, there is still no substitute for homegrown news coverage on the important events and happenings that only a local community paper can provide. From the city crime report to the latest little league scores, the Banner is the face of the community.

Through thick and thin, the Banner has operated as a reliable news source for Southern West Virginia's coal counties, and today, through subscription and on-line edition, the newspaper knows no geographic bounds around the globe.

Our Founders were quick to add in the first amendment to our Constitution, declaring Congress shall make no law to abridge the freedom of the press. Our Republic has been buoyed over the centuries by dedicated journalists doing a yeoman's task of reporting the news of the day regardless of whose ox is being gored. As a recent Banner editorial proclaimed, within its pages, the reader gets the good, the bad, and the ugly of insightful news impacting their lives.

Every member of the Logan Banner's team can take due pride in knowing that with every edition of the Banner they publish, they strengthen the bulwark of our Republic, a more informed citizen. Mr. Speaker, fellow colleagues, in recognition of its lasting contribution to our Nation, please join me in wishing Godspeed to the Logan Banner in its next 125 years of publishing.

JENNICA TROVER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jennica Trover for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jennica Trover is a 10th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jennica Trover is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jennica Trover for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MEMBER OF CONGRESS PAY SEQUESTRATION AND FAIRNESS ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Member of Congress Pay Sequestration and Fairness Act, which would subject the pay of Members of the House and Senate to any future sequestration, or automatic, across-the-board spending cuts. While Members of Congress may differ on the merits of sequestration, once the cuts are a matter of law, Members should abide by the laws we impose on the American people. The most serious effects of these arbitrary, across-the-board cuts are being felt by the American people. For example, during the remainder of this fiscal year, as a result of sequestration cuts to Medicare, many cancer clinic patients will have to go to hospitals for outpatient chemotherapy at sharply higher costs, or face reduced access to treatment. More than a million federal employees may be furloughed, which will result in reduced pay. It is simply unfair for well-paid Members of Congress to subject federal employees, who not only usually earn considerably less but are now also in their third year of frozen wages, to pay cuts that Members are unwilling to take themselves.

Under the 1985 law that established the sequestration process, the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act (also known as the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act), Congress expressly exempted certain federal programs, activities, and projects, including the President's pay, from sequestration. The pay of Members of Congress is not expressly exempt. Nevertheless, the Office of Management and Budget has interpreted the law to exempt the pay of Members. I would hope that today's Congress would revise the law. My bill would subject Member pay to any future sequestration implemented under the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act, including the Budget Control Act of 2011 and the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010. In order to comply with the 27th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits changes to Member pay until an intervening election, this bill would take effect next Congress.

I ask my colleagues to follow the example we set for ourselves when, in passing the Congressional Accountability Act, we pledged that the laws that apply to the American people would also apply to Members of Congress.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF THE LIFE OF OLIVE ''OLLIE'' MAYER

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of an extraordinary woman. Ollie Mayer died at the age of 94, in Woodside, California, after a lifetime of firsts, mosts, and bests. She was a force of nature, a force for nature, and a force for all things good and just. She was ahead of her time in everything she did, and the list of challenges she dared to face is long and daunting. Our beloved San Francisco Peninsula has been the beneficiary of so much of her brilliance and activism, and our world is a better place because she graced it.

Olive Hendricks was born on the East Coast and studied engineering at Swarthmore College. She and her husband, Dr. Henry Mayer, met while hiking the Rocky Mountains. They moved to Woodside, California, where Ollie started a machine shop, then a science education company, and then began devoting all her energies to environmental causes in the early 1970s. She was an activist for free speech during the McCarthy era and provided support for victims of blacklisting. She was an organizer of cultural exchanges between U.S. and Soviet women in the early 1960s. She was an early opponent of the Vietnam war and an early civil rights activist. She fearlessly took on unpopular causes, often alone. What an extraordinary example she set for generations to come.

Ollie's husband, Dr. Mayer, preceded her in death. She was the loving mother of Judy and Robert, and the devoted grandmother of four. She leaves behind countless friends, and I feel privileged to count myself among that group. I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our condolences to her family and her friends who mourn the passing of this great and good woman who did so much to strengthen our democracy and protect our environment, and lived a life that stands as an eloquent statement for the ages.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SIMON WIESENTHAL HOLOCAUST EDUCATION ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, as we commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Week, I am pleased to reintroduce the bipartisan Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Education Act, along with Representatives RANGEL, WAXMAN, PIERLUISI, and GRIMM.

Named for the honored Holocaust survivor Simon Wiesenthal, who spent his life working for justice for those murdered by the Nazis and to hunt down those who perpetrated such atrocities, this legislation would provide federal grants to educational organizations to teach students about the Holocaust. Through grants from the Department of Education, Holocaust organization programs would be able to apply for funds to improve the awareness and understanding of the Holocaust through classes, seminars, conferences, educational materials, and teacher training.

We must ensure that we learn from the legacy of previous generations of Holocaust survivors. Over 11 million people, including 6 million European Jews as well as gypsies, the disabled and mentally ill, homosexuals, and others, were systematically and brutally murdered in the Holocaust as the Nazis swept across Europe, destroying entire villages and communities.

More than half a century later, persecution and murder on the basis of religion, ethnicity, and sexuality continue across the globe. We need programs in our schools that allow students to learn about the consequences of intolerance and hate, so that we can truly say, ''never again.''

The Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Education Assistance Act is a positive step toward that end. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

JAZMIN MONTOYA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jazmin Montoya for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jazmin Montoya is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jazmin Montoya is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jazmin Montoya for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

SRIRAM HATHWAR CLINCHES SPOT FOR HIS FOURTH TRIP TO THE NATIONAL SCRIPPS SPELLING BEE IN WASHINGTON, DC

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sriram Hathwar who, this May, will compete in the National Scripps Spelling Bee for the fourth time in his scholastic career. During his first attendance in 2008, Hathwar notably became the youngest speller in the history of the event but was eliminated in the preliminaries. He performed increasingly better in 2009 and 2011, finishing sixth in 2011.

Sriram, a 12-year-old from Painted Post, New York, attends Corning's Alternative School for Math and Science. This year marks his sixth time contending in the Regional Spelling Bee, but it came with a new challenge: his younger brother. Out of 40 contestants, Sriram came head to head with his 10-year-old brother, Jairam Hathwar, in the final round. The last two standing flawlessly spelled out words such as ''liquesce'' and ''flexuosity'' for three rounds, until Jairam stumbled on ''jicama.'' Sriram then clinched the regional title with the word ''mobiliary.''

The National Scripps Spelling Bee, run on a not-for-profit basis by the E.W. Scripps Company and local spelling bee sponsors across the country, is the longest-running and largest educational promotion in the United States.

Sriram will compete live on ESPN in the 88th National Scripps Spelling Bee from May 28th–30th in our nation's capital. I wish him the best of luck in May.

CELEBRATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRESTON WEST REPUBLICAN WOMEN

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the Preston West Republican Women. This group organized in 1953 and has continued its mission to represent and strengthen the voice of women in northern-most developmental areas of Dallas.

This organization's leadership has provided their community and their neighbors with the opportunity to meet and know their representatives in local, state and the federal government. These exceptional women have worked diligently to recruit citizens and involve them in the political process, and promote the understanding of the conservative philosophy.

It is encouraging to see these leaders from Texas's Twenty-Fourth District do such great things. I continue to applaud them for their accomplishments over the last 60 years in raising awareness of their values, promoting the voice of women in North Dallas and being a guard for conservative beliefs.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to honor the members of the Preston West Republican Women for their 60 years of achievement and unwavering resolution in building this organization for the conservative women of North Dallas. I join their family, friends, and colleagues in congratulating them and wishing them continued growth and success.

IN OBSERVANCE OF HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in observance of the six million Jewish victims and millions of other victims who perished during the Shoah on Holocaust Remembrance Day.

As we commit ourselves to the memories of those lost, we must also remember the heroes and survivors of the Holocaust, whose strength and perseverance continue to inspire us to this day.

Our nation and the international community must never forget what took place throughout Europe during the Second World War at the hands of the murderous Nazis. Nor can we forget the government-sponsored discrimination, repression, and persecution that took place before the beginning of the war.

Throughout our country, Americans can observe the Holocaust at local community events, military bases, workplaces, schools, churches, synagogues, and museums. The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, has designated ''Never Again: Heeding the Warning Signs'' as the theme for the 2013 observance.

In my hometown of Houston, Texas, the Holocaust Museum Houston is observing Holocaust Remembrance Day with testimonials from survivors and for concerned Houstonians to share their views about genocide and see what can be done to end genocide in the present day.

In Israel, Yom Hashoah is remembered annually with a two minute siren where the country comes to a standstill to pay tribute to the dead. Flags are flown at half mast and ceremonies and services are locally held throughout the country.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by asking our fellow citizens to take a moment this week to remember the memories of those who did not survive the Holocaust and to reflect on what we can do, as Americans, to prevent such a tragedy from happening again.

JOHN JONES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud John Jones for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. John Jones is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by John Jones is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to John Jones for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING THE FLORIDA HIGHWAYMEN

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to honor the Florida Highwaymen, a group of twenty-six landscape artists who have been called ''The Last Great American Art Movement of the 20th century.''

Against tremendous odds and severe racial discrimination, these African American artists were able to define themselves as artistic innovators, producing more than 200,000 celebrated paintings.

The works of the Florida Highwaymen are unique. They developed their own individual techniques and captured waterscapes, backcountry marshes, and inlets before residential and industrial development. Their work—which is now proudly displayed in the Florida Capitol and the United States Senate—marks the beginning of Florida's contemporary art tradition and the ''Indian River School'' art movement.

Painting in the era of Jim Crow, the Highwaymen could not sell their paintings through traditional channels. Galleries and art festivals would not accept their works. The Highwaymen were forced to sell their artwork along roadsides in towns and cities throughout the eastern coastal roads of Florida. From the 1950s to the 1980s, the Highwaymen pressed forward, offering their works at bargain prices to the public. Until recently, countless Americans appreciated their artistry without knowing their identities.

The twenty-six members of the original Highwaymen are still alive. These men and women have earned their place in history. On Saturday, March 30, 2013, in the City of Pembroke Pines at the South West Focal Point Community Center their unique depictions of artwork will be displayed for the community to appreciate and view.

It is with heartfelt appreciation that I recognize their legacy. Please join me in honoring the Florida Highwaymen for their contributions to the world of art.

RECOGNIZING DAVID V. AGUILAR

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. David V. Aguilar for his retirement from his position as Deputy Commissioner with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Mr. Aguilar has dedicated his service leading the agency in protecting our nation's borders and its communities.

Mr. Aguilar joined the Border Patrol in June 1978 at Laredo, Texas, where he held positions of Assistant Patrol Agent in Charge and Patrol Agent in Charge.

From 1988 to August 1996, Mr. Aguilar served as Patrol Agent in Charge of three Border Patrol Stations in Texas (Dallas, Rio Grande Valley and Brownsville). Under his command, the Dallas and Brownsville stations were awarded the Commissioner's Award for Group Achievement.

From August 1996 to November 1999, Mr. Aguilar served as Assistant Regional Director for the Border Patrol in the central region of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service. As such, Mr. Aguilar was the principal advisor to the Regional Director, where he managed, directed and guided the regional program.

Mr. Aguilar was subsequently appointed as Chief Patrol Agent of the Tucson Sector. As Tucson Sector Chief, he had more than 2,000 agents and 200 support personnel under his command. Mr. Aguilar had oversight of eight geographically dispersed Border Patrol stations along 261 miles of the Arizona/Mexico border. In 2003, the Tucson sector earned the CBP Commissioner's anti-terrorism award for achievements under Operation Desert Safeguard, an operation planned, designed and implemented in the high-risk areas of the Tucson sector.

In March 2004, the Department of Homeland Security designated Mr. Aguilar as the Border and Transportation Security Integrator for the execution of the Arizona Border Control Initiative. In 2004, Mr. Aguilar was also elected as the President of the Southern Arizona Federal Executive Association.

In July 2004, Mr. Aguilar was named National Chief of the Border Patrol, assuming the position as the nation's highest-ranking Border Patrol agent. With expertise and knowledge gained from more than 31 years of service with the Border Patrol, Mr. Aguilar directed the enforcement efforts of more than 20,000 agents nationwide.

In April 2010, Mr. Aguilar was appointed Deputy Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. From December 2011 to August 2012, Mr. Aguilar served as acting Commissioner, CBP's highest-ranking official, leading the agency in border security, while fostering our Nation's economic security through lawful international trade and travel. Mr. Aguilar led a workforce of 60,000, including 43,000 uniformed law enforcement officers.

Mr. Aguilar holds an associate degree in accounting from the Laredo Community College, and attended Laredo State University and University of Texas at Arlington. He is a Senior Executive Fellow of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Mr. Aguilar is the recipient of the 2005 President's Meritorious Excellence Award and in 2008 was a recipient of the Presidential Rank Award.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored and privileged to have the opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Aguilar for his outstanding service in protecting our communities and his extraordinary commitment to our country. He has truly contributed to this nation in his efforts to protect our borders.

HONORING CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR NICHOLAS PETRIS

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the exceptional life of California State Senator Nicholas Petris. Known throughout California politics as a brilliant democratic lawmaker with visionary foresight, Nicholas Petris was also renowned for his professionalism, speaking prowess, and tireless advocacy for the underserved. With his passing, we look to Senator Petris' political legacy and the outstanding quality of his life's work.

Over a career that spanned four decades, Senator Petris was a hero to many—pioneering initiatives far ahead of their time in areas like environmental protection, mental health rights, and low-income housing. A child of Greek immigrants, Nicholas Petris was born in Oakland and educated in the Bay Area, graduating from the University of California, Berkeley and Stanford University Law School. He served in the Office of Strategic Service during World War II and practiced law for about a decade before being elected to the California Assembly in 1959.

In 1965, as an assemblyman, he famously collaborated with State Senator Eugene McAteer to write the bill that created the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, laying the foundation for the nonprofit Save The Bay to protect the resource from harmful development. He also worked to direct crucial resources to expand the University of California system.

Upon being elected to the State Senate in 1967, he immediately worked to pass the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act, which prohibited involuntary commitment and made quality mental health services more accessible. Furthermore, he continued the decade fearlessly taking on controversial battles: challenging the internal-combustion engine and emission practices of the auto industry and writing laws to ban smoking on airplanes and public transportation. These efforts eventually helped to usher in an era of air quality and clean-fuel regulation in California that was often stricter than the national standard. He also introduced bills to ban DDT and control ballooning vehicle numbers, which, although unsuccessful, demonstrated remarkable prescience in the face of today's environmental challenges.

As a passionate advocate for the poor, Senator Petris passed legislation that required redevelopment agencies to build housing for

low-income families. He also championed tenants' and workers' rights, inspiring lawmakers in both major parties to listen to the voices of average Californians. All the while, he was a loving husband to his wife of 60 years, the late Anna Vlahos.

On a personal note, I was incredibly honored to succeed Senator Petris upon his retirement due to term limits in 1996. He was a steadfast friend and provided wise counsel to me throughout my time in the California Legislature. Particularly, I will always remember Senator Petris and his beloved wife, Anna, taking me to dinner prior to my first visit to Greece. They provided me with invaluable travel tips for restaurants, shopping, and tourist attractions that made my first visit so exciting. Senator Petris' beloved Greece became one of my favorite countries to visit.

Today, we mourn the loss of a wise political pioneer, a respected lawmaker, and an innovative thinker who helped shape the State of California as we know it. His legislative insight, legendary eloquence, and the camaraderie he inspired among his colleagues is unmatched. Senator Nicholas Petris' legacy continues to thrive among generations of advocates committed to championing progressive California policy as a model for environmental and social justice throughout the world. I offer my sincerest condolences to his surviving family and to the many friends and associates whose lives he touched over the course of his long and fruitful life. He will be deeply missed.

JHAMIER RYAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jhamier Ryan for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jhamier Ryan is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jhamier Ryan is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jhamier Ryan for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, April 9th, 2013, I missed rollcall vote numbers 90, 91, and 92 for unavoidable reasons.

Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall no. 90: "yea" (On motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 254, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to facilitate the development of hydroelectric power on the Diamon Fork System of the Central Utah Project.)

Rollcall no. 91: "nay" (On motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1033, to authorize the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 under the American Battlefield Protection Program.)

Rollcall no. 92: "yea" (On approving the Journal.)

INTRODUCTION OF RFS REFORM ACT AND RFS ELIMINATION ACT

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I have long been a critic of the renewable fuel standard and we must act now to fix this broken policy.

While the livestock industry has been witnessing the effects of the RFS mandate for several years, the drought last year highlighted for many the extreme reach of the RFS throughout our economy. But even before the drought, by diverting feed stocks to fuel there have been diminished corn supplies for livestock and food producers. Tightening supplies have driven up the price of corn. The higher cost for corn is passed on to livestock and food producers. In turn, consumers see that price reflected in the price of food on the grocery store shelves and restaurants.

This year, the U.S. is expected to hit the blend wall—where the ethanol mandate will require more ethanol be produced than can be safely blended into gasoline. In order to address the blend wall by reducing the RFS mandate, EPA is working to push E15. EPA has granted a partial waiver to allow E15 blends for model cars 2001 and newer, despite the fact that a study from the Coordinating Research Council, commissioned by U.S. automakers and oil companies, found that 25 percent of cars approved by the EPA to run on E15 experienced engine damage—and even failure. The EPA should not be promoting fuel that is unsafe on the roadways just to meet a mandate.

EPA administrators from both parties have constantly refused to use the flexibility granted to them by law to alter the RFS, so Congress must act. That is why I am introducing two bills that would alter this artificially created government market.

The first bill, the Renewable Fuel Standard Elimination Act is simple; it would eliminate the RFS and make ethanol compete in a free market. The government should not be creating a market to sustain an entire industry. While, I believe that we should completely eliminate the RFS, I recognize that there may not yet be the political will in Congress to completely eliminate this mandate. And while there may not yet be the political will to eliminate this mandate we have to address the reality that we are being confronted and reform the broken RFS policy.

That is why I have joined with several colleagues in introducing legislation to reform the RFS. The Renewable Fuel Standard Reform Act eliminates the corn based ethanol requirements and caps the amount of ethanol that can be blended into conventional gasoline at 10 percent—a level that is safe for all vehicle models. And this legislation will require the EPA to set cellulosic biofuels levels at production levels—oil and gas refiners should not be fined for not being able to blend products that do not exist.

More than 40 diverse organizations are joining us to call for action to address the problems created by the RFS mandate. This is no longer just a debate about fuel or food. It is also a debate about jobs, small business, and economic growth. This mandate has wide reaching and negative impacts on a broad swath of industries. Congress created this artificial market that is distorting the food and feed market, and we must provide relief of its unintended consequences. I urge the Congress to pass this legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote Number 91 "To authorize the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 under the American Battlefield Protection Program" (H.R. 1033). Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

JEREMIAH BATES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jeremiah Bates for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jeremiah Bates is an 11th grader at Jeffco's 21st Century Virtual Academy and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jeremiah Bates is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jeremiah Bates for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

NATIONAL ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS WEEK

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for National Assistant Principals Week, April 8 through April 12, 2013. Assistant principals are vital school leaders responsible for establishing a positive learning environment and building strong school community relationships. The National Association of Secondary School Principals/Virco National Assistant Principal of the Year program began in 2004 to recognize outstanding middle and high school assistant principals who have demonstrated success in leadership, curriculum, and personalization. This week, 47 assistant principals from across the country will participate in professional development, networking, and advocacy to share best practices and discuss the issues facing school leaders today.

As a former principal, I would like to recognize these distinguished school leaders for the pivotal role they play in their school communities. Assistant principals interact with all sectors of the school community, including support and instructional staff members, students, and parents. Assistant principals play a significant role in the instructional leadership of the school by conducting instructional supervision, mentoring teachers, encouraging collaboration, and ensuring the implementation of best practices. Assistant principals also monitor student-achievement goals and progress, facilitate and model data-driven decision making to inform instruction, and foster continual school improvement. Furthermore, assistant principals support the day-to-day logistical operations of facility management, attendance, transportation, and scheduling, as well as supervise extra- and co-curricular events. Lastly, assistant principals are entrusted with maintaining an inviting, safe, and orderly school environment that supports the growth and achievement of each and every student by nurturing positive peer relationships, recognizing student achievement, analyzing behavior patterns, providing interventions, and conducting discipline.

I applaud the work of assistant principals and recognize their contributions to the success of students in schools in the United States. I encourage the people of the United States to observe National Assistant Principals Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the primacy of school leadership in ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education.

IN HONOR OF GREY NUN ACADEMY'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker I rise today to congratulate the 50th Anniversary of the Grey Nun Academy, a private Catholic school located within my district that serves prekindergarteners through the eighth grade.

Founded in 1963, the Grey Nun Academy opened in 1963 as the D'Youville Manor Academy in honor of Saint Margurite D'Youville, who founded the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart. Since then, The Grey Nun Academy has evolved into a school of 200 boys and girls. In 2009, the faculty of Gray Nun's educational work was recognized on the national level when the school was named a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the US Department of Education. Grey Nun Academy prides itself in creating a nurturing educational environment that encourages students to learn about themselves, and their faith.

As a lifelong resident of Bucks county, I greatly admire the Grey Nun Academy. Their commitment to creating exceptional students is highly valued within the community. Institutions such as the Grey Nun Academy are learning environments graced with dedicated teachers, administrators, and students. Grey Nun provides students with a strong foundation for success that influences their young students well into adulthood.

I am pleased to congratulate the Grey Nun Academy on its successes over the past 50 years and I hope that the Grey Nun Academy may provide a safe and compassionate learning environment in the coming years.

HONORING DR. MARKLEY SUTTON

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Markley Sutton, who is retiring after 31 years of service to the Sonoma Developmental Center.

Dr. Markley Sutton served in several different capacities at the Sonoma Developmental Center, most recently as the Senior Supervising Psychologist from 2003–2011. In this role he not only solved issues that arose with residents with behavioral problems, but also acted as a mentor and friend to the psychologists he supervised. He was always ready to pass on his considerable knowledge, and has taught at many universities on a range of topics centering on clinical issues, behavior concerns, and psychopharmacology for those with multiple diagnoses.

Dr. Sutton has received awards for his leadership including the Superior Accomplishment Award Supervisory Bonus Program from the State of California in both 1986 and 1992. He received the Outstanding Leadership Pioneer Award in 1998 and the Who's Who in California award in 1982, 1988 and 1989.

Dr. Sutton has a long and distinguished career in working with individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and individuals with some of the most challenging behavioral problems. Yet it is his ability to remain engaged, curious and always ready to pitch in when needed that most exemplifies him. There is no issue too challenging, no resident too difficult, nor any task beneath him.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Sutton has a long and distinguished career of service to others, most notably to the developmentally disabled population at Sonoma Developmental Center and those who seek his support in his private practice. It is therefore appropriate that we acknowledge Dr. Sutton today and wish him well in his retirement from Sonoma Developmental Center.

JAZMIN PHELPS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jazmin Phelps for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jazmin Phelps is an 8th grader at Oberon Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jazmin Phelps is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jazmin Phelps for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA AS THE ''TASTIEST TOWN IN THE SOUTH''

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the city of Durham, North Carolina that was recently recognized as the ''Tastiest Town in the South,'' by Southern Living magazine.

This year, from mid-January to February, ten Southern regions competed for the ultimate title of ''Tastiest Town in the South.'' During the voting period, over half a million votes were cast. The editors of Southern Living magazine highlighted Durham's unique ties to the land and its great prices—noting the burgeoning food scene has quietly made Durham one of the best food destinations in the South. In addition, many chef-owners, such as James Beard of Nana's Diner, have really helped to establish a diverse assortment of landmark restaurants—ranging from breweries and café's to comfort food.

Southern Living magazine listed several other notable places to eat in Durham including: Fullsteam Brewery, Pizzeria Toro, Geer Street Garden, Mateo Tapas, Monuts Donuts, Cocoa Cinnamon, Counter Culture Coffee, and Scratch Bakery. Other great Durham restaurants include Blue Coffee Café, Beyu Caffe, and Bistro Vin Rouge, just to name a few.

Mr. Speaker, when considering that Durham was competing against many more widely known Southern locales known for excellent cuisine, such as New Orleans, Atlanta, and Charleston, it's quite remarkable and impressive that Durham has created its own culinary niche. I share Durham County Commissioner Fred Foster's opinion that this award's impact will be felt for years to come.

This award is truly a tribute to the pioneers and current residents of Durham and the region. It is with great pleasure that I congratulate Durham for its recognition as the ''Tastiest Town in the South.''

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SERVICE OF JEREMIAH LOWNEY

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and admiration that I rise today to share with you the accomplishments of Jeremiah Lowney of Norwich, Connecticut.

I am pleased that the White House is honoring Jeremiah Lowney as a Champion of Change, which is a well deserved honor. On April 5, 2013 Jerry was honored with 11 other Rotary International Members that have improved the lives of thousands both in the United States and abroad. For over thirty years, Jeremiah ''Jerry'' Lowney has successfully applied his exceptional skills in orthodontia and medicine to helping those living in some of the world's most inhospitable conditions. After cultivating a fruitful career as an orthodontist, Jerry became focused on providing the most basic and necessary health services to those who needed it more than almost anyone in the world: the citizens of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. In doing so, Jerry selflessly prioritized his own health concerns below those of his future patients: he was recovering from surgery and radiation following treatment of a rare form of cancer when he embarked on his first mission trip to Haiti in 1982.

After dedicating three years of service toward Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity providing free dental care to Haitians in Port-au-Prince, Jerry was asked by Mother Teresa to branch out to Jeromie, a rural city in Southwestern Haiti suffering from severe deficiencies in both the quality and availability of health care. Jerry's tireless efforts led what was initially a small outreach group to blossom into the Haitian Health Foundation (HHF), a stalwart organization that has offered health care services to Jeromie and over 100 of the rural and remote mountain villages which surround it.

Though the Foundation's successes are innumerable in quantity, some recent highlights include: a 90 percent immunization rate, almost 100 percent reduction in diarrhea deaths, a national award for Vitamin A program which prevents child blindness, and a reduction in childhood deaths from bacterial pneumonia by more than 50 percent. In addition, the HHF maintains programs which distribute hot meals and take-home food for thousands of malnourished children, as well as a family sponsorship program that sends thousands of children to school each year.

As a recipient of dozens of humanitarian awards, Jerry's efforts have certainly not gone unrecognized. Yet despite his philanthropic accomplishments, Jerry has never lost his quiet, humble sense of duty and compassion for those less fortunate. Jerry's unwavering determination, skills, and philanthropic nature have led him to extraordinary success in one of the world's most impoverished regions. His actions have improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of impoverished Haitians, who without him may never have been able to find adequate care. Jerry has offered more than health and dental services to these people; he has offered them hope. Despite his grueling schedule running a busy dental practice and managing the Haitian clinic he also is active in the Norwich community lending a hand to civic and charitable causes of every type. His family, his hometown of Norwich, and all of eastern Connecticut are proud of Jerry Lowney's remarkable success, and I applaud the White House for recognizing his accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring the service and accomplishments of Jeremiah Lowney.

HONORING MARY O'RIORDAN, PARENT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION COUNTY OF SONOMA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mary O'Riordan, who is retiring after nine years as President of the Parent Hospital Association (PHA) at Sonoma Developmental Center.

Ms. O'Riordan dedicated her life to serving persons with developmental disabilities. As President of PSA, she was in constant contact with state legislators in Sacramento and federal representatives in Washington, DC, traveling multiple times to both capitals to advocate on behalf of association members. She also served six years on the board of directors of VOR, the national advocacy group for persons with developmental disabilities.

Ms. O'Riordon's advocacy is rooted in her personal experience. Michael, the second of her four sons, was severally disabled and lived at Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) until his death in January 2011. It was his experiences at SDC, the place he called home, that led her to champion the institution, its staff and its residents.

Ms. O'Riordon was passionate about her calling, stating, ''I look forward to the day when every family—those who have a developmentally disabled child and those who do not—are equally involved, engaged and concerned about the special needs of our developmentally disabled citizens and to the day when all legislators have their needs on the top of their list of priorities.''

In addition to her advocacy on behalf of SDC, Ms. O'Riordon was the administrative assistant for the Deputy Chief of Administration at the San Francisco Fire Department for 35 years. In this capacity, she was honored by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors for her outstanding service.

Mr. Speaker, Mary O'Riordan has a long and distinguished career in service to others, most notably to our developmentally disabled population. Her tireless commitment to her community is apparent and it is therefore appropriate that we acknowledge her today and wish her well in her retirement as President of the Parent Hospital Association.

JAMES CLEARY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud James Cleary for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. James Cleary is an 8th grader at Arvada K–8 and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by James Cleary is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to James Cleary for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

REMEMBERING THE LEGACY OF POLISH PRESIDENT LECH KACZYNSKI

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, three years ago, the Air Force TU 154 plane carrying Polish President Lech Kaczynski, his wife Maria, and 94 other top Polish officials crashed near Smolensk, Russia. The delegation had been on their way to Katyn to commemorate the deaths of 4400 Polish Army officers who were ruthlessly executed by the Soviets in 1943.

In the 1970s, Kaczynski, a staunch anti-communist, made a name for himself as an underground oppositionist, and, in 1980, when the Solidarity workers' union was founded, he assisted in the Gdansk Shipyard strike and later served as the group's legal adviser. In 1981, after the imposition of the martial law, he was put in prison.

In free Poland, Kaczynski served many roles—Senator, Mayor of Warsaw, Attorney General, Minister of Justice, and, in 2001, he was elected President.

President Kaczynski was always supportive of strong Poland–U.S. relations, and was skeptical of close relations with the German/French dominated European Union. Kaczynski rightly feared that reliance on Russian energy supplies would inhibit sober evaluation of Russian policies at home and abroad.

Americans appreciate our country's alliance with this great nation in the ongoing fight for freedom across the world. Today, three years after the tragic crash, we stand in solidarity with the people of Poland and mourn the loss of their President and countrymen.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, April 11, 2013 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's record.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 15

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2014 for Veterans' Programs.
SR–418

APRIL 16

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the situation in Afghanistan.
SH–216

9:45 a.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
Subcommittee on African Affairs
To hold hearings to examine ongoing conflict in Eastern Congo.
SD–419

10 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2014 for the Forest Service.
SD–366

Committee on Finance
To hold hearings to examine tax fraud and tax identity theft, focusing on moving forward with solutions.
SD–215

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine college affordability.
SD–430

Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights
To hold hearings to examine drone wars, focusing on the constitutional and counterterrorism implications of targeted killing.
SD–226

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
Business meeting to consider S. 657, to eliminate conditions in foreign prisons and other detention facilities that do not meet primary indicators of health, sanitation, and safety, S. Res. 90, standing with the people of Kenya following their national and local elections on March 4, 2013, and urging a peaceful and credible resolution of electoral disputes in the courts, the nomination of Jacob J. Lew, of New York, to be United States Governor of the International Monetary Fund, United States Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, United States Governor of the Inter-American Development Bank, and United States Governor of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and lists in the Foreign Service.
S–116

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings to examine aviation safety, focusing on the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) progress on key safety initiatives.
SR–253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water and Power
To hold hearings to examine S. 211, to amend certain definitions contained in the Provo River Project Transfer Act for purposes of clarifying certain property descriptions, S. 284, a bill to transfer certain facilities, easements, and rights-of-way to Fort Sumner Irrigation District, New Mexico, S. 510, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain interests in Federal land acquired for the Scofield Project in Carbon County, Utah S. 659, to reauthorize the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991, S. J.Res. 12, to consent to certain amendments enacted by the legislature of the State of Hawaii to the Hawaiian Homes Commission, Act, 1920 and H.R. 316, to reinstate and transfer certain hydroelectric licenses and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of certain hydroelectric projects.
SD–366

Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.
SD–226

Select Committee on Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.
SH–219

3 p.m.
Committee on the Budget
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget and revenue request for fiscal year 2014.
SD–608

APRIL 17

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program; to be immediately followed by a briefing on the situation in Syria.
SH–216

10 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2014 for the Department of Education.
SD–138

Committee on Finance
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2014.
SD–215

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2014 for the Department of Homeland Security.
SD–342

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2014 for the Small Business Administration.
SR–428A

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
To hold hearings to examine the Active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian personnel programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2014 for the National Nuclear Security Administration.
SD–192

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine nuclear forces and policies in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program; to be immediately followed by a closed session SVC–217.
SR–222

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings to examine the future of passenger rail, focusing on what's next for the Northeast Corridor.
SR–253

Committee on the Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine comprehensive immigration reform legislation.
SD–226

APRIL 18

9:30 a.m.
Joint Economic Committee
To hold hearings to examine the Federal Reserve System at 100, focusing on monetary policy.
SH–216

10 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the current and future worldwide threats to the national security of the United States; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC–217 following the open session.
SD–106

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2014 for the Department of Energy.
SD–366

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold hearings to examine the role of the Department of Defense science and technology enterprise for innovation and affordability in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine the current readiness of U.S. forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

Select Committee on Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.
SH–219

APRIL 23

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD–106

10 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine S. 306, to authorize all Bureau of Reclamation conduit facilities for hydropower development under Federal Reclamation law, S. 545, to improve hydropower, and an original bill to promote energy savings in residential and commercial buildings and industry.
SD–366

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine S. 59, to designate a Distinguished Flying Cross National Memorial at the March Field Air Museum in Riverside, California, S. 155, to designate a mountain in the State of Alaska as Denali, S. 156, to allow for the harvest of gull eggs by the Huna Tlingit people within Glacier Bay National Park in the State of Alaska, S. 219, to establish the Susquehanna Gateway National Heritage Area in the State of Pennsylvania, S. 225, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks, S. 228, to establish the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area, S. 285, to designate the Valles Caldera National Preserve as a unit of the National Park System, S. 305, to authorize the acquisition of core battlefield land at Champion Hill, Port Gibson, and Raymond for addition to Vicksburg National Military Park, S. 349, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate a segment of the Beaver, Chipuxet, Queen, Wood, and Pawcatuck Rivers in the States of Connecticut and Rhode Island for study for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, S. 371, to establish the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, to dedicate the Park to John H. Chafee, S. 476, to amend the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Development Act to extend to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission, S. 486, to authorize pedestrian and motorized vehicular access in Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area, S. 507, to establish the Manhattan Project National Historical Park in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Los Alamos, New Mexico, and Hanford, Washington, and S. 615, to establish Coltsville National Historical Park in the State of Connecticut.
SD–366

APRIL 24

10 a.m.
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 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine military construction, environmental, and base closure programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

APRIL 25

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC–217 following the open session.
SD–106

MAY 7

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SH–216

MAY 8

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
To hold hearings to examine Army modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2014 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

JUNE 11

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.
SD–G50

11 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.
SD–G50

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.
SD–G50

3:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.
SR–232A

6 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.
SR–232A

JUNE 12

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.
SR–222

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.
SR–222

JUNE 13

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.
SR–222

JUNE 14

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.
SR–222

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate confirmed the nomination of Sarah Jewell, of Washington, to be Secretary of the Interior.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2511–S2569

Measures Introduced: Eleven bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 692–702, S. Res. 95, and S. Con. Res. 12. **Page S2564**

Measures Passed:

National Lineman Appreciation Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 95, recognizing linemen, the profession of linemen, the contributions of these brave men and women who protect the public safety, and expressing support for the designation of April 18, 2013, as National Lineman Appreciation Day. **Page S2569**

Measures Considered:

Safe Communities, Safe Schools Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 649, to ensure that all individuals who should be prohibited from buying a firearm are listed in the national instant criminal background check system and require a background check for every firearm sale. **Pages S2512–42, S2547–51**

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 Thursday, April 11, 2013; that the time until 11 a.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two Leaders, or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to ten minutes, and that upon the use or yielding back of time, Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill. **Page S2569**

Message from the President: Senate received the following message from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, the Budget of the United States Government for Fiscal Year 2014; referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975 as modified by the order of April 11, 1986; which was referred to the Committees on Appropriations; and the Budget. (PM–7) **Pages S2559–62**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 87 yeas to 11 nays (Vote No. EX. 94), Sarah Jewell, of Washington, to be Secretary of the Interior. **Pages S2542–47, S2569**

Messages from the House: **Page S2562**

Measures Referred: **Page S2562**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Pages S2511, S2562**

Executive Communications: **Pages S2562–64**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S2564**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2564–65**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2565–68**

Additional Statements: **Page S2559**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Pages S2568–69**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—94) **Page S2547**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 6:45 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 11, 2013. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2569.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

NOMINATION

Committee on the Budget: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Sylvia Mathews Burwell, of West Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senator Manchin, testified and answered questions in her own behalf.

AMERICAN FREIGHT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine expanding the Panama Canal, focusing on what it means for American freight and infrastructure, after receiving testimony from Jeff Keever, Virginia Port Authority, Senior Deputy Executive Director, Norfolk; John Vickerman, Vickerman and Associates, Williamsburg, Virginia; Edward R. Hamberger, Association of American Railroads, Washington, DC; and Philip L. Byrd, Sr., Bulldog Hiway Express, Arlington, Virginia, on behalf of The American Trucking Associations.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE ON SYRIA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee received a closed briefing on an intelligence update on Syria from national security briefers.

BORDER SECURITY

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine border security, focusing on frontline perspectives on progress and remaining challenges, after receiving testimony from Randolph Alles, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Air and Marine, Michael J. Fisher, Chief, United States Border Patrol, and Kevin McAleenan, Acting Deputy Commissioner, all of United States Customs and Border Protection, and James A. Dinkins, Executive Associate Director, Homeland Security Investigations, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, all of the Department of Homeland Security.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 689, Mental Health Awareness and Improvement Act of 2013, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

The nomination of Jenny R. Yang, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

INDIAN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine identifying barriers to Indian housing development and finding solutions, after receiving testimony from Rodger J. Boyd, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Native American Programs, Office of Public and Indian Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Cheryl A. Causley, National American Indian Housing Council, Washington, DC; Annette Bryan, Puyallup Nation Housing Authority, Tacoma, Washington; Paul Iron Cloud, Oglala Sioux (Lakota) Housing, Pine Ridge, South Dakota; and Russell Sossamon, Choctaw National Housing Authority, Durant, Oklahoma.

NOMINATION

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Srikanth Srinivasan, of Virginia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senators Warner and Kaine, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

TAX-RELATED IDENTITY THEFT

Special Committee on Aging: Committee concluded a hearing to examine tax-related identity theft, focusing on an epidemic facing seniors and taxpayers, after receiving testimony from Kathryn Keneally, Assistant Attorney General, Tax Division, Department of Justice; J. Russell George, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, Department of the Treasury; Sal Augeri, Tampa Police Department, Tampa, Florida; and Marcy Hossli, Palm Beach, Florida.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 29 public bills, H.R. 1454–1482; and 7 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 29–30; and H.Res. 145, 147–150 were introduced. **Pages H1908–09**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1910–12**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 146, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1120) to prohibit the National Labor Relations Board from taking any action that requires a quorum of the members of the Board until such time as Board constituting a quorum shall have been confirmed by the Senate, the Supreme Court issues

a decision on the constitutionality of the appointments to the Board made in January 2012, or the adjournment sine die of the first session of the 113th Congress (H. Rept. 113–32).

Pages H1899–H1900, H1908

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Ribble to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1863**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:56 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H1869**

Electing Members to the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library and the Joint Committee on Printing: The House agreed to discharge from committee and agree to H. Res. 142, to elect Members to the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library and the Joint Committee on Printing.

Page H1878

Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act: The House passed H.R. 678, to authorize all Bureau of Reclamation conduit facilities for hydropower development under Federal Reclamation law, by a yea-and-nay vote of 416 yeas to 7 nays, Roll No. 96.

Pages H1874–78, H1878–90

Rejected the Garamendi motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 194 yeas to 226 nays, Roll No. 95. **Pages H1888–89**

Agreed to:

Tipton amendment (No. 3 printed in the Congressional Record of April 9, 2013) that requires the Bureau of Reclamation to apply its categorical exclusion process under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 to small conduit hydropower development, excluding siting of associated transmission facilities on Federal lands and **Pages H1884–85**

Tipton amendment (No. 2 printed in the Congressional Record of April 9, 2013) that makes technical changes relating to policy and procedure-setting with respect to irrigation districts or water users associations. **Pages H1886–87**

Rejected:

Napolitano amendment (No. 1 printed in the Congressional Record of April 9, 2013) that sought to strike the paragraph in the bill containing requirements regarding the application of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 to small conduit hydropower development and to change the definition of small conduit hydropower to mean a facility capable of producing 15 megawatts or less of electric capacity (by a recorded vote of 189 ayes to 232 noes, Roll No. 94). **Pages H1885–86, H1887–88**

H. Res. 140, the rule providing for consideration of the bill, was agreed to by voice vote after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 236 yeas to 190 nays, Roll No. 93. **Pages H1874–78**

Presidential Message: Read a message from the President wherein he transmitted to Congress his Budget of the United States Government for Fiscal Year 2014—referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 113–3).

Pages H1890–92

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1877–78, H1887–88, H1889, H1889–90. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND AND U.S. FORCES KOREA

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea. Testimony was heard from Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III, U.S. Navy, Commander, United States Pacific Command; General James D. Thurman, U.S. Army, Commander, United Nations Command; Commander, Republic of Korea-United States Combined Forces Command; and Commander United States Forces Korea.

APPROPRIATIONS—CAPITOL POLICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a hearing on U.S. Capitol Police. Testimony was heard from Chief Kim Dine, Chief of Police.

APPROPRIATIONS—SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION OVERSIGHT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a hearing on Small Business Administration Oversight. Testimony was heard from Peggy Gustafson, Inspector General, Small Business Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—REGULATORY APPROACHES TO FOSTER ECONOMIC GROWTH

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a hearing entitled "Regulatory Approaches to Foster Economic Growth". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Military Personnel held a hearing on mental health research. Testimony was heard from Jonathan Woodson, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, U.S. Department of Defense; Lieutenant General Patricia D. Horoho, USA, Surgeon General, U.S. Army; Vice Admiral Matthew L. Nathan, MC, USN, Surgeon General, U.S. Navy; Lieutenant General Thomas W. Travis, USAF, Surgeon General, U.S. Air Force; and Commander Russell B. Carr, M.D., USN, Service Chief, Adult Behavioral Health Clinic, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, U.S. Navy.

REVIEWING STEM EDUCATION IN AMERICA

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education held a hearing entitled ''Raising the Bar: Reviewing STEM Education in America''. Testimony was heard from George A. Scott, Director for Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

NORTHERN ROUTE APPROVAL ACT

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing on H.R. 3, the ''Northern Route Approval Act''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

OUR NATION OF BUILDERS: POWERING U.S. AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURING FORWARD

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''Our Nation of Builders: Powering U.S. Automobile Manufacturing Forward''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology began a markup on legislation to affirm the policy of the United States regarding Internet governance.

SUSTAINABLE HOUSING FINANCE: PERSPECTIVES ON REFORMING THE FHA

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance held a hearing entitled ''Sustainable Housing Finance: Perspectives on Reforming the FHA''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EXAMINING CREDIT UNION REGULATORY BURDENS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Financial Institutions held a hearing entitled ''Examining Credit Union Regulatory Burdens''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LUXURY JETS AND EMPTY PRISONS: WASTEFUL AND DUPLICATIVE SPENDING AT THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Luxury Jets and Empty Prisons: Wasteful and Duplicative Spending at the Department of Justice''. Testimony was heard from Senator Coburn; Lee J. Lofthus, Assistant Attorney General for Administration, Department of Justice; Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, Department of Justice, David C. Maurer, Director, Homeland Security and Justice, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE: WHAT OVERSIGHT MECHANISMS ARE IN PLACE TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''U.S. Foreign Assistance: What Oversight Mechanisms are in Place to Ensure Accountability?''. Testimony was heard from Harold W. Geisel, Deputy Inspector General, Department of State; Kenneth Moorefield, Deputy Inspector General for Special Plans and Operations, Department of Defense; Michael G. Carroll, Deputy Inspector General, Agency for International Development; John F. Sopko, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction; Paul Cooksey, Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction.

AHEAD OF POSTAL REFORM: HEARING FROM USPS BUSINESS PARTNERS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service, and the Census held a hearing entitled ''Ahead of Postal Reform: Hearing from USPS Business Partners''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

PREVENTING GREATER UNCERTAINTY IN LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS ACT

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 1120, the ''Preventing Greater Uncertainty in Labor-Management Relations Act''. The Committee granted, by record vote of 7–3, a closed rule for H.R. 1120. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The

rule provides that an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of the Rules Committee Print 113–6 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Chairman Kline and Representative Andrews.

REVIEW OF PRIVATE SECTOR EFFORTS TO TRACK AND MITIGATE ASTEROIDS AND METEORS

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Threats from Space, Part II: A Review of Private Sector Efforts to Track and Mitigate Asteroids and Meteors''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

SMALL BUSINESS TAX REFORM: GROWTH THROUGH SIMPLICITY

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Small Business Tax Reform: Growth Through Simplicity''. Testimony was heard from Chairman Camp; and public witnesses.

UPDATE OF EFFORTS TO COMBAT PIRACY

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime held a hearing on the efforts to combat piracy. Testimony was heard from Rear Admiral Servidio, Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy, United States Coast Guard; Rear Admiral Joseph Kuzmick, Director, Operations and Plans, United States Navy; David Matsuda, Administrator, Maritime Administration; Thomas Kelly, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State; and a public witness.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing on H.R. 357, the ''GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013''; H.R. 562, the ''VRAP Extension Act of 2013''; H.R. 631, the ''Servicemembers' Choice in Transition Act of 2013''; H.R. 844, the ''VetSuccess Enhancement Act''; H.R. 1305, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide clarification regarding eligibility for services under the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program; H.R. 1316, to amend title 38, United States Code, to specify the responsibilities of the Directors and Assistant Directors of Veterans' Employment and Training; H.R. 1402, the ''Veterans Paralympic Act of 2013''; H.R. 1453, the ''Improving Job Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2013''; and H.R. 1453 to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority to provide work-study allowance for certain activities by individuals receiving educational assistance by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Testimony was heard from Curtis L. Coy, Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; Susan Kelly, Deputy Director, Transition to Veterans Program Office, Department of Defense; Keith Kelly, Assistant Secretary, Veterans' Employment and Training Service, Department of Labor; and public witnesses.

SUSTAINING THE SACRED TRUST: AN UPDATE ON OUR NATIONAL CEMETERIES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Disability and Memorial Affairs held a hearing entitled ''Sustaining the Sacred Trust: An Update on our National Cemeteries''. Testimony was heard from Steve L. Muro, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; Kathryn Condon, Executive Director of Army National Cemeteries Program, Department of Defense; Raymond Wollman, Deputy Secretary, American Battle Monuments Commission; Linda Halliday, Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations, Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General; and public witnesses.

ABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO PRIORITIZE ITS OBLIGATIONS SHOULD THE U.S. TREASURY REACH ITS STATUTORY DEBT LIMIT

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Oversight held a hearing on examining the government's ability to prioritize its obligations and continue operations should the U.S. Treasury reach its statutory debt limit. Testimony was heard from Representatives Bachmann, McClintock, Scalise, Schweikert, and Webster (FL).

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 624, the ''Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act''. The bill was ordered reported, with amendments.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2013

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal

year 2014 for the Department of Commerce, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2014 for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, 10 a.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of General Philip M. Breedlove, USAF for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United States European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Full Committee, to receive a briefing on the situation in Syria, 2:30 p.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection, to hold hearings to examine outsourcing accountability, focusing on examining the role of independent consultants, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2014, 2 p.m., SD–608.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Regina McCarthy, of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, 10:30 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2014, 2:30 p.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine United States policy toward Syria, 2:15 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine an open marketplace, focusing on the effect of guaranteed issue and new rating rules, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider the nominations of Kenneth John Gonzales, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Mexico, Gregory Alan Phillips, of Wyoming, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit, and Karol Virginia Mason, of Georgia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, hearing on the Department of Education, 10 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, hearing on FY 2014 Budget Request for the Department of Homeland Security, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, hearing on Oversight Hearing: Nuclear Waste Programs and Strategies, 10 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, Department of Commerce Budget Request, 1:30 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of the Interior Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2014, 1 p.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing on Fiscal Year 2014 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Department of Defense, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing on Equipping the Individual Soldier and Marine: Current and Future Year Acquisition and Modernization Strategies and the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Request, 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The President's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget'', 10 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, hearing on H.R. 1406, the ''Working Families Flexibility Act of 2013'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Strengthening Medicare for Seniors: Understanding the Challenges of Traditional Medicare's Benefit Design'', 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, hearing on a draft discussion on the ''Coal Ash Recycling and Oversight Act of 2013'', 10:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Communications and Technology continued markup on legislation to affirm the policy of the United States regarding Internet governance, 2:15 p.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Capital Markets, hearing entitled ''Legislative Proposals Regarding Derivatives and SEC Economic Analysis'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled ''Highlighting Vietnamese Government Human Rights Violations in Advance of the U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa; Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific; and Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, hearing entitled ''Breaking the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nexus'', 2:30 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, hearing entitled ''Energy Opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean'', 3 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, hearing entitled ''Counterterrorism Efforts to Combat a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Attack on the Homeland'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Transportation Security, hearing entitled ''TSA's Efforts to Advance Risk-Based Security: Stakeholder Perspectives'', 1 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 367, the ''Regulations From the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2013'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation, hearing on the following: legislation regarding ''Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act''; H.R. 1294, the ''Self-Sufficient Community Lands Act''; H.R. 818, the ''Healthy Forest Management and Wildfire Prevention Act''; H.R. 1345, the ''Catastrophic Wildfire Prevention Act of 2013''; legislation regarding the ''O&C Trust, Conservation, and Jobs Act''; and legislation regarding the ''Depleting Risk from Insect Infestation, Soil Erosion, and Catastrophic Fire Act of 2013'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service, and the Census, hearing entitled ''The Federal Employees Health Benefit Program: Is It a Good Value for Federal Employees?'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 875, to provide for a comprehensive assessment of the scientific and technical research on the implications of the use of mid-level ethanol blends, and for other purposes; and H.R. 1422, the ''EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2013'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight and Regulations, hearing entitled ''JOBS Act Implementation Update'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, hearing entitled ''Amtrak's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget: The Starting Point for Reauthorization'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Full Committee, hearing on U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2014, 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, hearing on President's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Proposal with U.S. Department of the Treasury, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

House Permanent Select Committee On Intelligence, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Worldwide Threats'', 10 a.m., HVC–210. Portions of this meeting may close, HVC–304.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, April 11

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 649, Safe Communities, Safe Schools Act, with a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill at approximately 11 a.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, April 11

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Begin consideration of H.R. 1120—Preventing Greater Uncertainty in Labor-Management Relations Act (Subject to a Rule).

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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